



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

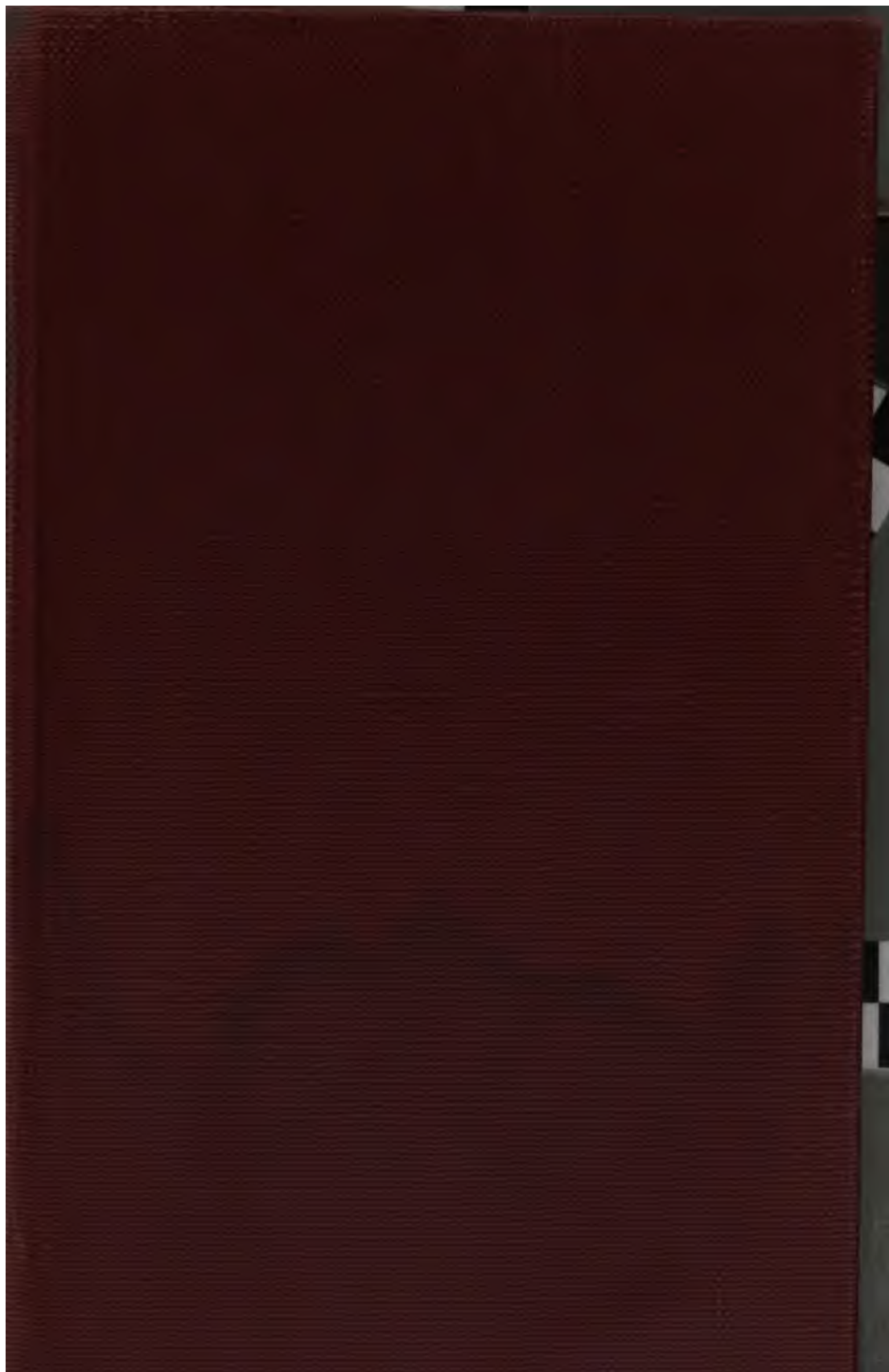
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



1000

2000



HISTORY
OF THE
AMERICAN THEATRE.

BY
WILLIAM DUNLAP,

AUTHOR OF MEMOIRS OF GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE, &c.

Where is that palace whereinto sometimes
Roul things intrude not?
The corruption of the Theatre is no disproof of its innate and primitive utility.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1833.

MVR

PN2221

D8

v.2



LONDON:
J. SNOWELL, JUN., LONG ACRE.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER XX.

1797.—The two Theatres in New-York—Lailson's Circus—Two Theatres in Boston—Wignell returns to Philadelphia and Hodgkinson to New-York—Mr. Cooper joins the New-York Company—The New, or Park Theatre, opened, January 29th, 1798—Mr. Wignell closes the Philadelphia Theatre, and assigns as the causes Mr. Moreton's ill-health and the defection of Messrs. Fennell and Cooper—Mr. Cooper's Hamlet—Tragedy of André—Joan of Arc—Chalmers and Melocosmiotis—Mr. Hodgkinson determines to relinquish New-York, and engages both the Boston Houses—The Park Theatre leased to Mr. Dunlap—Biography of Mr. William B. Wood Page 1

CHAPTER XXI.

Autobiography—Scenes before the American Revolution—Scenes during the War of the Revolution—First Visit to a Theatre—London and its Theatres—Pedestrian Tour to Oxford with Dr. S. L. Mitchill—Old Soldier of the 47th 38

CHAPTER XXII.

Salaries and Expenses—Miss Westray and Miss E. Westray—Holcroft—Mr. and Mrs. Barrett—Yellow Fever of 1798—The Theatre of New-York not opened until the 3rd of December, 1798—Saved by bringing out The Stranger—Biographical Notice of Kotzebue 70

CHAPTER XXIII.

Boston Theatre, autumn of 1798—Names of Performers there engaged—Mrs. S. Powell—Mr. Villiers—New-York Theatre—Sterne's Maria, or The Vintage—The Natural Daughter—Great success of The Stranger—Lovers' Vows—Count Benyowski—Schiller's Don Carlos—Biography of Schiller 91

CHAPTER XXIV.

- 1799.—The Italian Father—Philadelphia Company—New Agreement for the New-York Theatre—Wignell and Reinagle's failure in Philadelphia—Proposals to Mrs. Merry—Her Letter in answer—Mr. Hodgkinson offers himself and family for the New-York Theatre, and is engaged—Death of Stephen Wools—Fennell opens a theatre in New York and shuts it again—Yellow Fever of 1799—Letter from Kotzebue—New-York Theatre opens 18th of November—False Shame—Force of Calumny—Wild-goose Chase—Robbers—Death of Washington—Mr. Cooper leaves New-York—Virgin of the Sun—Pizarro 105

CHAPTER XXV.

- 1800—Theatre at Mount Vernon Gardens—Mr. Corré—Effects of the Departure of Mr. Cooper—Theatre opens Oct 20th, 1800—Names of Performers—Mrs. Powell—Mr. Fennell—Fraternal Discord, or Bruder Zwist—Mr. Harper—Mrs. Jefferson's first appearance—Mr. White—Mr. Winstanley—Joanna of Montfaucon—Abälino—Zschokke—De Montfort—Joanna Baillie 128

CHAPTER XXVI.

- Mr. Hodgkinson prefers being a Salaried Performer to sharing Profits.—Mr. White's Romeo—The Abbé de l'Epée—Philadelphia Company—Engagement of Mrs. Merry and Mr. Cooper for New-York—Starring—Miss E. A. Westray—Mr. Placide—Hodgkinson's Falstaff—Opening of the Theatre in October 1802—Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock—Mr. and Mrs. Johnson arrive from England—Mr. Prigmore—Mr. Wilson—Blue Beard—The Wheel of Truth—The Voice of Nature—Mr. Cooper departs for Drury-Lane—Consequences of the Wheel of Truth—Jonathan Oldstyle and Andrew Quoz 145

CHAPTER XXVII.

- Letter against Theatrical Exhibitions from John Murray, Jun. a Quaker, to Wm. Dunlap, and his Answer 184

CHAPTER XXVIII.

- Boston Theatre and Mrs. Powell—Miss F. Hodgkinson—Alphonso—Mrs. Gannett—Mrs. Wignell—Mrs. Hodgkinson—Miss Brett—Messrs. Claude and Clarke—Mr. Hodgkinson's Bankruptcy in Philadelphia—Death of Mrs. Hodgkinson and Miss Brett, 1803 190

CHAPTER XXIX.

1803.—Albany—New-York Company—John E. Harwood—Parallel between Harwood and Hodgkinson—John Bull—Harwood's Dennis Brulgruddery—Hogg's Job Thornberry—Bonaparte in England—Mr. Searson—The Theatre of New-York sold by Auction—Conceit can Kill, Conceit can Cure—Lewis of Monte Blanco, or the Transplanted Irishman—Harwood's Military Irishman—Mr. and Mrs. Darley—Mr. Huntington—Mr. Cooper returns from England—Bankruptcy of the Manager of the New-York Theatre	200
--	-----

CHAPTER XXX.

1805.—Mr. Twaits—Twait's and Cooper—Captain Smith—Boston Theatre Boston—Death of Mr. Hodgkinson—Philadelphia Company—Mr. Cain—Lessons on Intemperance—New York Theatre under Johnson and Tyler—Miss Ross—Mrs. Wheatley—Mrs. Jones—Mr. and Mrs. Young—Mr. Fennell, a star—Play of the Wanderer—Tars from Tripoli—Manhattan Stage—New-York Theatre leased to Mr. Cooper—Mr. Robinson—Mr. Jones—Mr. and Mrs. Johnson's return to Europe	215
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXI.

Philadelphia Company in 1806—Mr. Cooper opens the New York Theatre—Company—Mr. Morse—Mr. Cooper's Second Season of Management—Theatre Remodelled—Boston Theatre—New York Theatre under Cooper and Price—Mr. Twait's Prince of Wales—Death of Mr. Hallam—Theatre in Lexington, Kentucky—Death of Mrs. Warren—Master Payne's first Appearance—Comedy of Man and Wife—The Duke of Buckingham—Mr. and Mrs. Duff	241
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXII.

1809.—Mr. and Mrs. Poe—Mr. and Mrs. Young—To Marry or Not to Marry—Grieving's a Folly—Mrs. Mason—Her Widow Cheerly—Mr. Simpson—His Debût—His Early History—Engaged by Dr. Irving for New-York—Mr. Cooper's De Montfort—Foundling of the Forest—Venoni—Mr. Oliff, and other Prompters, at New York—Mr. Dwyer—His Debût and Early History—Mr. Cooper goes to England, 1810—Mr. Bray—Mr. Wood at New-York—Mr. and Mrs. Stanley—Arrival of Mr. Cooke.	268
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A short Chapter of Additional Autobiography	278
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Present State of the English Stage—Plan of, and Wish for, Reform	281
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXV.

Charleston Theatre — Solee — Williamson — Placide — Co-partnership of Placide, Greene, and Twaits—Destruction of the Richmond Theatre by Fire, and Dissolution of the Charleston management of that period—Mr. Caldwell and the Theatres of Western States	293
--	-----

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Two Letters from two Dramatists	307
---------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Scraps—Mr. Cooke's Father—Miss Rock—Cooke and Matthews—Kean—Cooke's Monument—Mr. and Miss Holman—Dr. Wilson's Letter to Dr. Hosack — Dr. Hosack's Letter introducing Mr. Holman to a Friend in Philadelphia—Letter to Dr. Hosack on the Death of Mr. Holman—Conclusion	325
--	-----

APPENDIX.

Regulations of the Theatre Français at Paris	365
Catalogue of American Plays and their Authors	381

THE AMERICAN THEATRE.

CHAPTER XX.

1797 — The two Theatres in New-York — Lailson's Circus — Two Theatres in Boston — Wignell returns to Philadelphia and Hodgkinson to New-York — Mr. Cooper joins the New-York Company — The New or Park Theatre opened, January 29th, 1798 — Mr. Wignell closes the Philadelphia Theatre, and assigns as the causes Mr. Moreton's ill-health, and the defection of Messrs. Fennell and Cooper — Mr. Cooper's Hamlet — Tragedy of André — Joan of Arc — Chalmers and Melocosmiotis — Mr. Hodgkinson determines to relinquish New-York, and engages both the Boston houses — The Park Theatre leased to Mr. Dunlap — Biography of Mr. William B. Wood.

THE yellow fever having taken possession of Philadelphia, in August, 1797, Solee's intended opening in the old theatre in Southwark was prevented, and, as before noticed, he (or rather the company directed by their own whims) was playing at John Street, and Wignell's company, well directed and organized, in Greenwich Street. An extract from a letter will give a notion of the relative success.

"Solee opened here last Friday, the 18th of August, to 374 dollars, and played again on Monday to 315 dollars. I hear much praise of Mrs. Williamson's *Little Pickle*. Last Wednesday, the 23d of August, Wignell opened with *Venice Preserved*, and *Who's the Dupe?* to upwards of 1000 dollars. The performance was highly approved, and Mrs. Merry left a lasting impression."

This splendid exhibition has been noticed. Harwood appeared in *Gradus*, which he played very finely. Another extract: "We went to John Street, where, to a very thin audience (130 dollars) was performed *The Gamester* and *Romp*. Mrs. Barrett's personation of Mrs. Beverley was very respectable, and her appearance majestic; there was not much else to praise, except Mrs. Williamson's *Romp*. Barrett is not equal to a first place in a company *now* and *here*. Wignell was present and most of his performers, who were tittering at the performance of the tragedy." On the other hand, "Williamson declares Cooper's *Pierre* 'execrable,' Moreton's *Jaffier* 'very so-so,' and Mrs. Merry's last night's performance 'below par.' Barrett says, 'he saw nothing to be frightened at.'"

Fennell made his first appearance in New-York, in the character of Zanga, early in September, adding still more to the reputation of the Greenwich Street Company.

Another extract: "I last night (September 11th, 1797) saw Mrs. Merry's *Juliet* with much delight.

There were a great many people present, the first and most respectable of our people, while at John Street, *Bunker's Hill* was performing to a mere rabble, amounting to a house of 200 dollars, and even the rabble execrated it. On Friday night Wignell played Columbus to something above 600 dollars. The John Street company put off until Saturday. On Saturday Wignell repeated Columbus to, I think, less than 200 dollars. The John Street company put off until further notice."

Thus Hodgkinson was playing in the Haymarket theatre, Boston, to houses below expenses, but paying the salaries of himself and family, and his partner borrowing money in the hope to keep together the company for the new house, and be repaid in the autumn by opening it. He advanced to Solee, as one engaged by Hodgkinson, to a large amount, which he had finally to lose.

The John Street theatre, under Solee, was closed October 3rd, 1797, with *Jane Shore* and *The Poor Soldier*; *Jane Shore*, by an American lady; *Alicia*, by an English lady; both first appearances. The American had figure and voice, though in the main abominably bad. The English woman was Irish, and had played several times in other places; it was an Irish first appearance, and reminds us of the gentleman who, coming to join a company after they had left the place, exclaims—"I'm *first*, *after all*."

While Wignell was using Rickett's circus as a theatre, Lailson was building a new one, likewise

in Greenwich Street. No vestige of either remains.

Cooper, dissatisfied with Wignell's preference of Fennell, and Wignell, perhaps, dissatisfied with Cooper's inattention to business, were now openly at variance, and it was prophesied that the young tragedian would not submit to the rule of one who treated him *en cavalier*. Indeed, it was already reported, that he was going to Charleston, S. C. with Solee. On the other hand, Wignell threatened to arrest him. This difference was made up, and Cooper continued to play in Greenwich Street, and occasionally had an opportunity of bursting forth with a force and fire, guided by genius and taste, that won the audience of New-York, and made him a decided favourite before the theatre closed. His Hastings, in *Jane Shore*, made a great impression ; on some, a greater than his Pierre had done.

Solee having made arrangements with Hodgkinson for occupying the Haymarket theatre, Boston, and having carried his company thither, and Hodgkinson having broken up for New-York, his partner in this losing business left home for Boston, thinking to meet him on the road, and deeming it necessary to be on the spot, to secure, if possible, the sums lent to Solee. They did not meet. Solee had not yet opened the theatre at Boston. All parties appear to have been playing at cross-purposes, and every step was leading to ultimate bankruptcy.

The Haymarket theatre, Boston, was opened in December, the Federal Street theatre being open likewise, and both playing to loss. After in vain waiting, in the hope of obtaining something more than promises from Solee, the disappointed manager retraced his way to New-York, where Hodgkinson had opened the John Street theatre, the new house being yet unfinished. The first play and farce were, *The School for Arrogance*, and *The Adopted Child*. The company consisted of Messrs. Hallam, Hodgkinson, Tyler, Johnson, Fawcet, Jefferson, Hallam, jun., Martin, Prigmore, Seymour, Miller, Lee, Leonard, Chalmers, Williamson the singer, and Simpson the Irishman ;—Mesdames Hallam, Hodgkinson, Melmoth, Johnson, Tyler, Brett, Seymour, Collins, and Simpson ;—Misses Broadhurst, Westray, E. Westray, Brett, Harding, and Hogg.

As might be expected, the loss on such an establishment (kept up with the hope of opening the costly new theatre, so long in anticipation, and which was to have been ready in October) was as regular as the play-day or pay-day ; but there was now no retreat, and the managers were urgent with the proprietors of the new building to complete the portion absolutely necessary, and let them take possession.

On the 27th of December, the two *stars*, Chalmers (who was a good comedian), and Williamson (a singer from Covent Garden), were produced, the first as Vapid, in Reynolds's first comedy, the

second as Tom Tug in *The Waterman*. The receipts of the house 222 dollars. Chalmers failed after Hodgkinson's Vapid ; but Williamson's singing was approved.

Even New-Year's day could not give profit to the loaded and sinking establishment. The holy-day play only produced 494 dollars.

On the 1st of January, 1798, Mr. Cooper arrived from Philadelphia. His discontents, perhaps the mutual discontents, in regard to his situation with Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, were increased. The public of New-York had preferred him to all tragic actors they had seen. He was now solicited by a number of gentlemen, with whom he had become intimate during the summer and autumn, to play one night while in New-York, for his amusement and their gratification, and he yielded to the request, writing to Wignell and informing him of the circumstance. Pierre in *Venice Preserved* was selected, and on the 4th of January he rehearsed it with Hodgkinson's Jaffier.

Wignell, by letter, forbade Cooper's playing in New-York. There had been a money transaction, in which the managers had suffered a note given to Mr. Cooper to be protested. In this letter there was a proviso that the note should be paid, provided he was on the spot by a certain day. A previous day had been stipulated for. Mr. Cooper continued his determination to gratify his New-York friends, and wrote to Wignell that he would be in Philadelphia by the time appointed. "I

might, perhaps, fail my friend," said he, "in an appointment; never my enemy."

Wignell wrote to Hodgkinson, and used an expression conveying the idea that Cooper had informed him (Wignell), that Hodgkinson had solicited him to play in New-York. This was denied by Mr. Cooper, in his letter to Wignell, with the assertion that he had told him the simple truth, and asked his permission.

On the 5th of January, Mr. Cooper played Pierre in the John Street theatre, but even this novelty only produced a receipt of 240 dollars, and to his Penruddock, next night, 160 dollars. Hodgkinson never played Jaffier so well as with Cooper's Pierre.

It appears that Messrs. Hodgkinson and Dunlap had been proceeding in this long course of exertion with continued loss, to support a company for the new building, without having obtained the signatures of the committee of proprietors to the agreement, which secured the possession of that theatre to them, which was expected to repay the money lost, and discharge the debts contracted. It was now necessary to stop the business at John Street, which added by every succeeding exhibition to the losses already incurred, and to open the new house in its unfinished state as a *derniere ressource*.

In this state of the business Mr. William Henderson, who was the acting man of the committee, proposed to the managers that they should admit

the proprietors with free tickets into the theatre. The number of proprietors was 130. Thus, in addition to the deduction to be made from the receipts as above stated on every occasion when the theatre had extraordinary attraction from extraordinary exertion, novelty, or expense, the managers might be deprived of 130 dollars by the admission of those free of expense, who were most likely to attend and pay for admission.

It appears that the committee had contracted debts for the building on their own responsibility, and now were about to call upon the proprietors to assume them. They therefore wished to present this additional view of advantage from their contract.

In a conversation between Mr. Henderson and one of the managers it was objected, that no such diminution of the receipts was contemplated when the agreement with the committee was made; that in consequence of that agreement great loss had been sustained. The free admittance was then talked of as a temporary thing, to cease after a short time. It was objected that if once granted it could not without offence be withdrawn.

Here was a lesson. The managers had proceeded upon an unsigned contract, and one of them risked his mercantile property and credit upon an agreement which, if not fulfilled, would make ruin certain.

On the 13th January, 1798, the writer went, as was usual with him, to see how the new building


was progressing, and his friend Dr. E. H. Smith went with him. We had scarcely entered the lower boxes when Mr. Henderson accosted us from the third row on the opposite side, and we went to him. Mr. Carlisle Pollock (one of the committee), was with him, and was reading a paper. "I have just given Mr. Pollock a piece to read which I have drawn up for publication." He took it from Pollock and gave it to the manager.

In this paper the committee informed the proprietors, or subscribers, that the theatre would be opened; apologized for its not being finished in the style contemplated, and told them that, by a temporary agreement, or arrangement, with the managers, the proprietors would be admitted free of expense with untransferable tickets. The manager returned the paper, with his thumb upon the part respecting the admission tickets, and, Pollock and Smith both attending, he pointedly observed that there had been "no such arrangement or agreement." This was admitted. The manager, in answer to suggestions that such an arrangement would be for the benefit of the lessees, said that on the profits from opening he had relied for relief from debt contracted in consequence of his agreement with the committee; that it was now many months since the agreement; that the idea of granting free tickets had not been suggested; that the terms were publicly known, and no dissatisfaction on the part of the proprietors expressed; that, if the idea of free admission was

suggested by the committee, the subscribers would not be satisfied if the managers did not comply with the demand. Mr. Henderson said that all the subscribers to whom he had mentioned it expected free admission. As Pollock and Henderson both protested that they only wished to devise means for mutual benefit, the parties separated by agreement to meet at the house of Mr. Pollock. A meeting accordingly took place between the managers and the committee, the result of which was, that the proprietors should be admitted free, and a reduction made on the percentage before agreed upon. The first took place, but not the second. This was another step in the down-hill road.

Mr. Cooper returned to Philadelphia, was arrested by the managers of the Chestnut Street theatre, gave bail, and returned to New-York, where his admirers had assured him of a welcome reception.

On the 22d of January, 1798, Mr. Wm. Henderson put into the hands of the New-York managers a memorandum of agreement to be substituted for that which had been acted upon. By this the free tickets to 113 subscribers were to be given. No free admissions were to be given except to performers for themselves, and those as few as possible. The managers were not to cause any scenery or machinery to be made without the consent of the proprietors, and such to be valued and paid for by the proprietors on the occupants' leaving



the house. No alterations to be made to the scenery and machinery without the consent of the proprietors, and the managers to be answerable for all damage done to either, necessary use and fire excepted. The proprietors reserved to themselves all the rooms in front of the building, except one for a box-office, and finally, stipulated that the agreement should continue in force until such time as the proprietors shall decide "in what mode the debts for which the property is liable shall be paid." Such is a faithful abstract of this most extraordinary proposal of an agreement as a substitute for that which had been made and acted upon, but had not been rendered legal by the forms required.

One of the partners wrote a plain statement of the objections to this proposed substitute. The reader will observe that the agreement by this proposal might be annulled at the pleasure of the proprietors; that the managers could not prepare for a new play or after-piece without the consent of the committee; that authors of plays could not be made free of the house; that neither the friends of the lessees, nor even their families, could have free admission; and in short, that the managers were to consent to annul the agreement on the faith of which they had contracted debts and sustained losses, and so bind themselves as to render the prospect of future success impossible.

Subsequently, the committee professed not to intend their memorandum to convey the meaning

understood by the managers, but said they could not lease the theatre for a definite time. They requested some memorandum before giving possession. One was drawn up, leaving the time for which the theatre was leased undefined, but stating that the first agreement with the committee was for three years and a half, and pledging the committee to use their influence with the proprietors so to continue the occupants. The most objectionable parts of the memorandum as proposed by Mr. Henderson were omitted.

At length, on the 29th of January, 1798, the new theatre was opened in an unfinished state, and with a scanty supply of scenes. The scenery, machinery, and stage, were under the direction of Mr. Charles Ciceri, heretofore mentioned. The landscapes were painted by Mr. Audin, his assistant. The play of the night was *As You like It*, the farce was *The Purse*. The house was opened with an address written by Dr. E. H. Smith, and spoken by Mr. Hodgkinson. A prelude was performed, written by Mr. Milne, and called *All in a Bustle*. The house was overflowing, but such was the confusion, from the press of the crowd, and the want of such precautions as experience would have suggested, that great numbers entered without paying at the doors or delivering tickets. Mr. Cooper, seeing the confusion and the want of energy in one of the box-doorkeepers, took his place, and restored order at one of the entrances. The amount received on this first evening of perform-

ance was 1,232 dollars. The next night, January 31st, sunk to 513, and the third, with Mr. Chalmers' first appearance in the new theatre, to 265 dollars. The succeeding week only averaged 333 each evening. The theatre in John Street was soon afterwards pulled down, and on the site three houses were built.

Mr. Cooper was now out of employment in his profession, as he felt it impossible to continue under the management of Mr. Wignell; and the managers of the New-York company had been formally threatened with legal prosecution if they suffered him to play on their stage. He consulted James Kent, Esq., whose opinion was that the managers would be liable to a suit and damages for every time Mr. Cooper played for them.

Early in February, 1798, the Federal Street theatre, Boston, was burnt. In consequence of this incident, and of the apparent continuance of poor if not losing business in New-York, Mr. Hodgkinson already formed a plan for himself of breaking off from the latter place and establishing himself in the Haymarket, now the only theatre in Boston. He even wished to go immediately, and communicated his scheme to others, without giving any intimation to his partner. Barrett, who had been thrown out of employ by the burning of the Federal Street theatre, of which he had been manager, arrived in New-York, with a letter from Mr. Blake, one of the proprietors of the Haymarket, recommending that Barrett should be put

in possession of that theatre. It being necessary that this should be communicated by Hodgkinson to his partner, he, for the first time, on the 15th of February, showed him two letters from Mr. Winthrop, advising him to come on immediately and establish himself there.

At this time Mr. Hodgkinson declared his wish to leave New-York, and proposed that a separation should take place, he forming a company for the ensuing winter and going to Boston. His partner raised no objections to his wishes. Mr. Hodgkinson even desired to leave New-York immediately, but that was objected to, and it was concluded to consent to the Boston company taking possession of the Haymarket theatre for a certain number of nights, they paying a rent to the proprietors to be credited to the lessees. Barrett and the company were to play until the 23d of March, 1798, and pay 10 per cent. on the receipts. Two days after Hodgkinson received a letter, signed by Stimson, Winthrop, and two other trustees, disapproving the agreement.

The following address of the managers of the theatre in Philadelphia will convey an idea of the difficulties and embarrassments which they had to encounter at this period. It appears that Fennell, who had been the cherished object of their attentions, and whose popularity, supported by them, had been one cause for that dissatisfaction, which deprived them of Cooper, repaid their partiality by ingratitude.

NEW THEATRE.

The managers deem it their duty to inform the public, that the entertainments of the theatre are unavoidably suspended till Monday next, in consequence of the unfortunate indisposition of Mr. Moreton, the injurious defection of Mr. Cooper, and the unprecedented, peremptory refusal of Mr. Fennell to perform the character twice announced for him. Of the first gentleman, the managers must ever speak in terms of acknowledgment, approbation, and friendship, for that uniform exertion in his profession, which has at once advanced the interests of the Drama, and justly rendered him the favourite of its patrons.

On Mr. Cooper's conduct they can make no remark at this time, as the violation of his contract is the subject of a suit now depending in the Supreme Court; and, in relation to Mr. Fennell, they are content at present to observe, that independent of the good faith which his engagements ought to inspire, the liberality he has hitherto experienced from the managers, as well as from the public, had naturally raised an expectation that he would not ungratefully have taken advantage of the existing state of the theatre, either to embarrass the former or obstruct the amusements of the latter.

The managers, having thus respectfully represented the real cause of the postponement of their entertainments (an event equally unexpected and prejudicial) cannot avoid adverting to the difficulty of executing with universal approbation so arduous a task as that which they have undertaken; but they solemnly declare that, in every department of their duty towards the public, and in all their transactions with the performers, their incessant effort has been to give satisfaction; and under that declaration they anxiously hope that they shall experience favour and protection, a candid interpretation of their conduct, and a spirit of mutual accommodation.

WIGNELL & REINAGLE.

February 20, 1798.

In the mean time Mr. Cooper's friends in New-York made up the sum of £500 sterling, being the penalty of his bond, and he carried the money to Philadelphia, and formally tendered it to Wignell and Reinagle, who refused it. It was tendered to

them jointly and severally in the presence of two witnesses, and refused, but the managers afterwards sent for Cooper, who refused to return, but offered Dallas, their attorney, 1200 dollars, which he refused, pressing him to pay the whole sum and accept a discharge. This Mr. Cooper refused, and, returning to New-York, brought back the money.

On the 28th of February, 1798, the bill announced Mr. Cooper's engagement, and was headed, "To the public.—Mr. Cooper, by certain unfortunate circumstances, being prevented from the future exercise of his profession for nearly two years, unless he pays the penalty of his article to Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, the managers of this theatre propose to appropriate the profits of this his first night's performance towards the discharge of the same."

The play was *Hamlet*, and the farce *The Adopted Child*; and never, probably, was the Danish prince so well played in America, for the actor knew he was playing to those who justly appreciated his talent, and had no prejudices in favour of a rival tragedian. Until this night he had displayed this dramatic character to an audience whose first love had been won by Fennell, and whose prejudice in favour of that actor had been cherished by the directors of the theatre in which they were both engaged. The amount of the receipts was 895 dollars. The young actor was received with enthusiasm.

On the 21st of February, 1798, the proprietors of the new theatre met, and their committee reported that, after expending the original money subscribed, a debt was incurred of £34,000, or 85,000 dollars. We have before stated that the first scheme consisted of 80 shares at 375 dollars, which makes an amount of 127,000 dollars. As there were at this time 113 subscribers who had paid, we may state the amount paid at 42,375 dollars, to which add the debt contracted, and we have a total of 127,375 dollars, and the building far from being completed. The waste, mistakes, and mismanagement, in erecting this building are perhaps unexampled. The useless excavations under the stage and pit remain as testimonies, for though the house has been rebuilt, and burnt, and rebuilt again, these yawning abysses still remain, and, though covered over, will long remain monuments of "alacrity at sinking."

Mr. Hodgkinson's partner in the management had now finished another tragedy called *André*—a most unfortunate subject for the stage, at a period so near the time of the event dramatised. Mr. Burk, the author of *Bunker's Hill*, had likewise a tragedy ready for the stage, which was left for perusal with the author of *André*.

A few days afterwards, the two dramatists met, and the following is part of a dialogue which passed in the street :

" Well, sir, have you read my play ? "

" Yes. "

"And how do you like it?"

"It wants correction."

"What do you mean by correction? I am sure there are no grammatical errors."

"Unless I had the book before me, it is impossible for me to explain my meaning precisely, or point out the parts which I think would be better for your revisal. As far as I recollect, there are some false or confused metaphors, easily remedied when you look it over again, and I recommend it to your severe attention before it is put into the prompter's hands."

"Sir, I have bestowed the utmost attention on it. I am proud of it. It has received every attention, sir."

"But there are few literary productions that could not be made more perfect. There appears to be an incongruity in the character of the heroine. Joan of Arc is first brought forward as a person really inspired, as in Shakspeare's drama, or at least believing herself to be directly inspired from above; subsequently, she represents herself as inspired only by her patriotism; and finally, she is a prophetess, again inspired by Heaven, and possessed of foreknowledge, which she communicates in a letter to her countrymen, sent from the stake."

The author vehemently defended his heroine and his play, but agreed to take it back and re-write it.

Early in March, it being generally known that Hodgkinson had determined on leaving New-York for Boston, there to commence manager of the Haymarket theatre on his sole account, Mr. Henderson offered the lease of the house to Mr. Dunlap, if the proprietors agreed, for the sum of five thousand dollars per year. Such an agreement was subsequently entered into.

The receipts in the new theatre were now uniformly below the expenses, except on the night Cooper played *Romeo*, March 9th, when the amount was 735 dollars. It became necessary either to stop or retrench. Chalmers was utterly useless. He would only play first comedy or tragedy, and the public justly preferred Hodgkinson, in one or both, and Cooper in the last. He was perfectly at his ease—did nothing—received his salary—dined with Hodgkinson every day, and sat by his Madeira, as long as he and friend Williamson, the singer, found it convenient or agreeable. If the host said, "I must go to the theatre to dress," the friends were unmoved by the hint. If it was repeated, Chalmers would say, "Very well, Hodge, leave the big bottle with us, we will take care of it."

It was, however, hinted to the free and easy gentleman, that salaries must be reduced and more work done, and he chose to give up his situation, provided he might take his benefit. This was agreed to, and he was allowed to make his own bill. The entertainments were, *The Road to Ruin*

and readings by Mr. Chalmers, with songs, &c. &c. under the unintelligible title of *Melocosmiotis*. The incomprehensible title, and the novelty of readings from the stage, succeeded to the comedian's wishes. The house was nearly full. The receipts were 1177 dollars. After the comedy, in which he played Goldfinch, *Melocosmiotis* commenced. Chalmers, in full dress, was discovered seated on the stage. He read passages of prose and poetry. The pit hissed—the gallery called for *Melocosmiotis*. Chalmers knew that the bait had taken, he saw the trap full; he laughed in his sleeve, and gravely rose, and bowed whenever he was saluted with a hiss.

The next night *Robin Hood* and *Next Door Neighbours* were played to 99 dollars. *Zorinski* was got up with care and expense, and produced 293 dollars receipts.

The tragedy of *André* was performed for the first time on the 30th of March, 1798. The receipts were 817 dollars, a temporary relief. The play was received with warm applause, until Mr. Cooper, in the character of a young American officer, who had been treated as a brother by André, when a prisoner with the British, in his zeal and gratitude, having pleaded for the life of the spy in vain, tears the American cockade from his casque, and throws it from him. This was not, perhaps could not be, understood by a mixed assembly; they thought the country and its defenders insulted, and a hiss ensued—it was soon quieted,

and the play ended with applause. But the feeling excited by the incident was propagated out of doors. Cooper's friends wished the play withdrawn, on his account, fearing for his popularity. However, the author made an alteration in the incident, and subsequently all went on to the end with applause. The applause of a theatre! The play was printed, and is forgotten. A portion of it was incorporated with a holiday drama, which the author afterwards put together, and called *The Glory of Columbia—her Yeomanry*, which was likewise published, and is occasionally murdered for the amusement of holiday fools. The tragedy of André was thus cast:

The General, Mr. Hallam; André, Hodgkinson; Bland, Cooper; M'Donald, Tyler; Melville, Williamson; Seward, Martin; British Officer, Hogg; American Officer, Miller; Mrs. Bland, Mrs. Melmoth; Honora, Mrs. Johnson. Children, Miss Hogg and Master Stockwell.

Our friend Cooper was at this time rather in the habit of neglecting such *parts* as were not *first*, or exactly to his mind. Young Bland was not the hero of the piece, and very little of the author's blank verse came *un-amended* from the mouth of the tragedian. In what was intended as the most pathetic scene of the play, between Cooper and Hodgkinson, the first, as Bland, after repeating, "Oh, André—oh, André," as often as "Jemmy Thomson" wrote "Oh, Sophonisba," approached the unfortunate André, who in vain waited for *his*

cue, and, falling in a burst of sorrow on his neck, cried, loud enough to be heard at the side scene, "Oh, André—damn the prompter!—Oh, André! What's next, Hodgkinson?" and sunk in unutterable sorrow on the breast of his overwhelmed friend, upon whose more practised stage cleverness he relied for support in the trying scene—*trying* to the author as well as actor and audience.

The Nestor of histrionics, Colley Cibber, says, "to show respect to an audience is worth the best actor's labour; and, his business considered, he must be a very impudent one that comes before them with a conscious negligence of what he is about."

It was now necessary to know Mr. Hodgkinson's intention definitely, and Mr. Henderson, having requested an answer to the query, whether he intended to continue in New-York, it was given in the negative. He said that he had written to the proprietors of the Haymarket theatre, that unless he could have the Federal Street theatre for the winter, and the Haymarket for the summer, he would not take either. The Federal Street theatre was then being rebuilt, and the proprietors offered it to him. He said if he staid in New-York, it would be as an actor only: that he had a letter from the Federal Street proprietors, in which they expressed their satisfaction in his acceptance of their offer. "You wrote to them that you would come?" "Yes. But the terms are not yet settled. At any rate, I will never be a

manager here." This passed with his partner, who was advised by him to make up a company immediately, and in consequence proceeded to Philadelphia, with a view to engaging Mr. Bernard as stage manager and first comedian for the ensuing season, his engagements with Wignell and Reinagle being at an end in the month of August of this year. Mr. Bernard declined the offer. His note of Thursday the 12th of April, 1798, concludes with offers of services with other performers in England, or elsewhere—wishes for success, &c. "I am sorry circumstances will not permit me to quit Philadelphia, but a promise has been extorted from me to continue, by those friends that I cannot disoblige: I once more return you sincere thanks for your polite offer and friendly wishes."

Mr. Benjamin Carr was at this time a publisher and teacher of music at Philadelphia. The reader will perhaps recollect that he was the composer of the music for the manager's *William Tell*, or *Archers*, and performed in it. At his house by appointment a negotiation was commenced with Mrs. Oldmixon. She stated that she had received offers from Mr. Whitlock, for Charleston; that her previous engagement at Philadelphia had been seven guineas per week, and a benefit ensured; that she would engage for the best old women, in comedy, the comic singing characters, and occasionally a serious one, and the best chambermaids—and referred the manager to Sir John.

The manager had an interview also with Harwood. On the 13th of April, the New-York manager rode to Germantown in the stage, and found waiting for him, at the inn, a horse, sent by Sir John Oldmixon, for his accommodation, and a servant with a horse and cart, the identical market-cart before mentioned. The manager preferred a walk of a mile and a half to Sir John's cottage, where he passed the night, having in the evening engaged the lady at the salary above mentioned, she finding her own dresses for the stage. Her benefit was to be free from charges, and 38 weeks in the year to be paid for, unless the theatre was shut by some unavoidable calamity. The knight's signature is to the engagement, in very gentlemanly illegible letters.

On returning to New-York the following note was written to Mr. Hallam.—“ Sir, the committee of proprietors of the new theatre, not choosing, or not having the power to prolong the lease of it beyond the present season on the terms agreed to with Mr. Hodgkinson and myself, and Mr. Hodgkinson declining all further concern in the holding or improving the said theatre, all engagements, agreements, or contracts, depending upon our jointly holding and improving it, must necessarily cease at the close of the season. The above-mentioned committee have, however, in consideration of the loss sustained by me in the management, offered the house to me for the ensuing year for

the sum of 5000 dollars, and it is my intention, immediately on the close of the present season, to proceed in decorating the house and preparing a full stock of scenery, and to open it early in September.

“Your situation and theatrical character entitle you to every consideration on a change of this kind, and I hereby offer to sell to you my lease for the sum which shall appear on closing the present season to have been lost by me, in consequence of my having hired the new theatre, provided I can obtain the consent of the proprietors so to do ; in which case I will altogether withdraw ; or I will for the half or fourth of my aforesaid loss sell the half or fourth of any profit I may gain in the ensuing year, you joining with me in the business and leaving the direction to me ; or, I offer for your assistance and the assistance of Mrs. Hallam as performers 50 dollars weekly, you both finding your stage clothes ; and, in addition, a weekly sum to be determined upon for the use of your theatrical property, to be agreed upon by us or left to indifferent persons.” To the last proposal he acceded.

On the 27th of April, 1798, articles of agreement were signed by Carlisle Pollock, Jacob Morton, and Wm. Henderson, on the one part, and Wm. Dunlap on the other, and witnessed by E. H. Smith and Wm. Johnson, by which the theatre and “the property belonging to it” were leased, and possession agreed to be given immediately on closing the present season, for the sum of 5000

dollars for one year, to be paid at eight payments. Untransferable rights of free admission to be given to 113 persons, except on benefit nights. If, from war, prevailing sickness, or other public calamity, the theatre should not be opened for eight months during the year, a deduction to be made of one hundred and forty seven dollars and five cents for each week it is so closed. Scenery made during the year to be valued fairly and paid for by the proprietors.

On the 13th of April, Mr. Burk's tragedy of *Joan of Arc* was brought out. It was execrably performed by the male actors. The female performers were never deficient in their duty. The receipts were 238 dollars. The managers declined repeating it, unless the author gave security for the expenses. He said that Brockholst Livingston, Esq. had consented to be his security; but on a note being addressed to that gentleman he returned for answer, that "Mr. Burk had *mistaken* him, and that he had advised him not to risk the repetition of his play."

Mr. Hodgkinson brought out a farce, written by his friend Milne, called *A Flash in the Pan*.—It proved so.

The benefits commenced on the 10th of April, and several new dramatic pieces were hastily got up, all of which were consigned to merited oblivion. Among them we must mention one called *The Federal Oath, or Americans strike Home*, by the infamous Anthony Pasquin. This man was intro-

duced to the writer by Mr. Hodgkinson. His appearance was not more prepossessing than his writings. He afterwards offered to hire himself for a low salary to puff the theatre. The offer was declined. His real name was Williams. He obtained a living in London for years, by writing libels on players and painters. A judge on the bench, we think Lord Mansfield, said, "his touch is pollution." Yet we see this man's opinions, in matters of art, gravely quoted in modern books.

Mr. Cooper, Mr. Jefferson, Mrs. Melmoth, Miss Westray, Miss E. Westray, and generally the most valued of the company, chose to re-engage with the New-York director. Mr. Martin was engaged as a deputy stage manager. Mr. Johnson made a verbal engagement for himself and wife at 25 dollars per week each, but shortly afterwards informed the manager that he had determined to go to England, in consequence of a letter, which he produced and read, from a friend, who informed him that both Harris and Wroughton wished for Mrs. Johnson's services, and a situation was open to her at either house. "Harris," he said, "offers her a salary which will entitle her to give orders" (this was explained as meaning a sum not under six guineas), "and in case of success as good a salary as any woman in the company." The offer of Mr. Harris was accepted.

The theatre closed on the 29th of June, 1798, and Mr. Hodgkinson, with a part of the company, went on to Boston and opened the Haymarket.

The company of Wignell and Reinagle were employed this summer at Annapolis and Baltimore. At the former place Mr. Wm. B. Wood made his first appearance on the stage, to which his talents have been an ornament, and his conduct through life an honour. Of the following biographical sketch of this gentleman he says, "it is positively true, though not flattering. It was drawn up by one of (now) the first men of the country, and at my request, for fear the violent zeal at that moment of Carpenter should make me ridiculous."

The father of Mr. Wood was a respectable goldsmith of New-York. He left his native city when the British took possession of it in the revolution, and retired to Montreal. During his residence there, on the 26th May, 1779, Mr. William B. Wood was born. At four years of age he was brought by his father to New-York, and at the early age of eleven years was placed in a counting-house, not long before the celebrated scrip speculation, which terminated in the failure of many respectable houses, and among others of that to which he was attached. Left to seek his fortune out of trade, young Wood was placed in the office of an attorney, where he remained twelve months. Thus early bustled about from school to counting-house, and from counting-house to office, it may be expected that our young gentleman was somewhat manly for his years, as he had at least learnt that he must take care of himself. Anxious, therefore, for something like an independence,

he entered again into a merchant's counting-house as clerk, at a small salary, with little recommendation except integrity and the faculty of writing an excellent hand.


A prospect now opened for a voyage to the West Indies with commercial views, which was gladly embraced; and in the year 1797 Mr. Wood embarked on this expedition. He remained abroad a twelvemonth, and returned extremely poor, somewhat profligate, and very proud. These qualities, as might be expected, brought on difficulty after difficulty, and heaped embarrassment upon embarrassment, until his career was brought up (though still some years short of manhood), by imprisonment for debt in the Philadelphia jail. While in confinement, and revolving the various means of struggling through life, he recollected that he had obtained some premiums and praise for his elocution when at school, and he saw through the bars of his prison an eminence of theatrical fame, which he fancied would readily be attained. As soon as an arrangement could be made with his few creditors, he left this city for Annapolis, where Mr. Wignell was then performing with the Philadelphia company, and presented himself to the manager, full of expectation, and throbbing with the certainty of success. This was in 1798.

This was the dawn of Mr. Wood's theatrical life; and never did a more inauspicious sun arise. He was feeble in health, indolent, little habituated

to theatrical studies, indifferent as to voice, and extremely young. Mr. Wignell, therefore, who was a friend to his father, strenuously advised him to relinquish his idea of a dramatic life, but all in vain—the young gentleman “had heard of battles,” and was resolved to be a tragedy hero.

It is somewhat strange that at this time, and for some years afterwards, Mr. Wood never thought of genteel comedy, on which principally his present fame is founded, as a road to reputation ; and looked down with ineffable contempt upon every thing but the dagger and the buskin.

After much persuasion, Mr. Wignell, with that goodness of heart which always characterized him, determined to gratify the young man, and George Barnwell was fixed upon as the proper *debut* of this tragic actor. Wood’s figure, albeit not corpulent at best, was reduced to a skeleton by a recent illness, and he appeared more like George Barnwell a year after his execution, than the blooming lover of Milwood. As the manager expected, the performance absolutely failed. Not a ray of merit shone from the character, and our friend Wood since declares, that it was the most execrable thing that ever came before the public. He was, however, not disheartened : baffled in a great attempt, he had at least the consolation of Phaeton—*magnis tamen excidit ausis* ; and he must perforce clip his wings, and content himself for a while with an humble flight. And much more lowly it was indeed, for, during the whole of



that season, at Annapolis and Baltimore, he figured away in the next grade above message-carriers, until his patience, and even his ambition, were nearly exhausted. In Philadelphia, he opened in the part of Plethora, in *Secrets worth Knowing*, and so miserably meagre was his frame, and so consumptive and sickly his hue, that the audience were at a loss whether to consider the player as performing a part, or exhibiting the unaffected symptoms of disease.

After performing some little time, with no improvement, and of course with miserable prospects, Mr. Wood's father interposed, and insisted upon his quitting the stage. To this he consented, and embarked a second time for the West Indies, with the view of establishing himself permanently there. Prospects were now fair, and a fortune would, probably, have been acquired, but that the climate proved so hostile to his constitution as to force our friend to return to this country. After an eight months' absence, he returned home, and wrung from his father "a slow leave" to resume his occupations on the stage. During his absence, however, Mr. Cain had come forward with *eclat*, and had given promise of great excellence, so that the place which Wood's ambition had sometimes marked out for him, in its most extravagant moments, was already occupied, and Mr. Wignell received him with greater reluctance than before. He continued to play inferior, very inferior, parts, principally in tragedy, until accident brought to

light some sparks of merit in another line. When the play of *The Heir at Law* was first got up, the part of Dick Dowlas was allotted to Mr. Blisset. That gentleman, either thinking the character ill adapted to his style of acting, or perhaps really indisposed, gave it up, when of necessity the part fell upon Wood. He appeared after a few hours of hasty study, and gained considerable reputation in the piece, which was a favourite and often repeated. This was the first character that Mr. Wood played really well, and from this time he turned his attention towards genteel comedy, in which now he performs the whole range of first-rate parts. Wignell, in Dr. Pangloss, Warren, in Baron Duberly, and we may add Wood, in Dick Dowlas, rendered *The Heir at Law* an excellent play.

When *Speed the Plough* was brought forward, Wood took Bob Hardy, and did it extremely well. From this time forward he began to be tolerated, though still not admired. Mr. Wignell, although from the first he considered him a bad actor, always entertained for him the highest esteem as a man. He therefore, in the year 1799, appointed him treasurer of the theatre, in which station he continued until 1803. When Mr. Cooper went to England, the necessity of filling up a stock play threw Wood into the part of Rolla, which he performed frequently, and always with increasing reputation.

In the month of January, 1803, Mr. Wignell

died : Mr. Warren undertook the management of the theatre, and Wood continued for some time, as his assistant or coadjutor in the task. In this capacity he went to England, in June, 1803, with a view to recruit the company, that had sustained some heavy losses. Here was a glorious opportunity for improvement—an opportunity which we believe was not neglected. His taste had been formed upon very imperfect models, and it was difficult for him to conceive an accurate idea of chaste performance from anything he had seen in America. With an enthusiastic devotion to his business, it is not to be wondered at that he carried to an extravagant length his admiration of Mr. Kemble, Mr. Lewis, and Mrs. Siddons. He attended the theatre faithfully, during his continuance in England, and returned greatly improved in his knowledge of acting, bringing with him some additions to the Philadelphia corps.

Soon after his return from England, Mr. Wood married Miss Juliana Westray, who was then rising rapidly into distinction, and is now an excellent actress on our boards. He was thus rescued from all danger of falling again into his habits of dissipation, and henceforth devoted himself entirely to his profession and his family. From this period he has progressively advanced in merit, and of consequence in public estimation. The inattention or ill-health of Cain soon enabled our friend Wood to overtake and outstrip him in the course,

and he assumed a station of the first respectability on the Philadelphia stage.

In the winter of 1808-9, the labours of the theatre falling upon him with peculiar weight, Mr. Wood's health sunk under the exertions. While performing the part of Charles de Moor, he broke a small blood vessel, and was for some time extremely ill. Before a recovery could be entirely effected he renewed his labours, and induced by that means a relapse, which had nearly carried him to his grave. A sea voyage was recommended, as a last resort, and he took leave of his friends, and embarked for England. While absent, report stated him to be dead, and many who knew his worth lamented him as such. They were, however, equally surprised and delighted, by his resurrection in *propria persona*, and that too in perfect health and with renewed strength.

The winter following, Mr. Wood reaped a whole harvest of laurels, and established his fame on the most solid basis. He played Perez, Iago, and a variety of other parts with great effect. At the close of the season, he purchased into the management with Mr. Warren, and renewed the lease of the theatre for five years : so that the Philadelphia audience are secured in the possession of this valuable actor, for at least a considerable length of time.

The manager of the New-York theatre invited Wood to go and play a few nights there. The

invitation was accepted, and the impression made was such as to extend his reputation, and gratify his pride in the highest degree. While there, he performed De Valmont twice, Don Felix, in *The Wonder*, Penruddock, and Rolla. His Penruddock, particularly, we understand, though seen after that of Mr. Cooper, was universally applauded, and warmly admired.

Perhaps the best piece of acting exhibited by our friend is that of De Valmont, in *The Foundling of the Forest*; a part for which the author has done little, but left much for the genius of the actor. The feeling and gentlemanly deportment of Mr. Wood peculiarly calculated him for the character, and he has performed it frequently with augmented reputation and success.

Mr. Wood's forte is decidedly genteel comedy, but he succeeds admirably well in tragedy. His striking excellence is a never-failing perfect knowledge of his author, both as to sentiment and language. If we were to designate the parts in which he particularly excels, we should say that his Belcour, Reuben Glenroy, Vapid, Tangent, Sir Charles Racket, Michael Perez, Mercutio, and Benedict, in comedy; and in tragedy, his Brutus, Jaffier, Iago, Alonzo in *The Revenge*, Charles de Moor, and Penruddock, were all excellent performances.

We have before hinted, that Mr. Wood's reputation was not so much the effect of natural endowments as the legitimate offspring of long and unwearied application, persevering ambition, and

an enthusiastic love of the profession which he embraced almost from necessity. These qualities have enabled him successfully to combat, and finally to defeat, the disadvantages of a delicate frame and an unmelodious voice, and they have gained a reputation scarcely surpassed on this side of the Atlantic. They are enforced, indeed, by the advantages of a person tall and genteel, a deportment easy and graceful, manners engaging and polite, and a most amiable character in private life. We have therefore always confidence that an actor so endowed must perpetually improve, since the mind cannot be affected by accident, nor its varieties rendered uninteresting by time.


One of the most disagreeable, perhaps humiliating circumstances attending the life of an actor is, that personal enmity, or partiality to a rival, or mere caprice in the most despicable portion of the community, may subject him to insult when on the stage. On the 19th of March, 1810, Mr. Wood was suddenly taken ill on a benefit night. The play was changed. The friends of the actor, who had assembled for his benefit, chose to be irritated against Wood, and threats were loudly uttered of hissing him on his next appearance. He however wisely addressed the audience, and by what was termed an apology, but which was only a plain statement of a fact, deprived the valiant heroes, who in the safety of numbers and obscurity had purposed to insult him, of an apology even to themselves for the outrage.

Mr. Wood's most successful efforts have been in the *Copper Captain*, *Prince of Wales*, and generally the characters in which Mr. Lewis, of Covent Garden, shone unrivalled in his best days ; yet, in very many serious and tragic performances, in *De Valmont*, *Reuben Glenroy*, *Jaffier*, and many other characters of first-rate importance, he has gained reputation, and may be considered as an actor of uncommon versatility of talent.

CHAPTER XXI.

Autobiography—Scenes before the American Revolution—Scenes during the War of the Revolution—First visit to a Theatre—London and its Theatres—Pedestrian Tour to Oxford with Dr. S. L. Mitchill—Old Soldier of the 47th.

THAT the reader may decide how far the person who in 1798 assumed the direction of that powerful and complicated engine, the theatre of a great metropolis, was fitted for the delicate task and great responsibility, it is necessary that a brief retrospect of his life should be taken. The opinion of the writer is (an opinion perhaps founded upon the result of the experiment) that he was not fitted for the arduous task. Had it been his lot to direct a theatre patronized by an enlightened government, having no care but that of selecting dramas and such performers as would best promote the great end of human happiness, he might perhaps have been entitled to the grateful remembrance of his fellow-men ; but he was now, after a trial of management in conjunction with another person, forced by previous circumstances to burthen himself with a hazardous speculation, which, as far as it had been proved, was unsuccessful ; and the power he once possessed of meeting



temporary losses and providing the means of success had been lamentably diminished. Instead of having an unembarrassed mind, whose entire powers could be directed to that which should be object of such an institution, he was tempted to seek resources for the supply of the treasury and the fulfilment of his pecuniary engagements. Instead of studying to gain the approbation of the wise, pressing necessities turned his thoughts to the common methods of attracting the vulgar.

The subject of the present chapter was born in the city of Perth Amboy, on the 19th of February, 1766. The writer has endeavoured to avoid the much-dreaded pronoun "I" in the previous part of the work, but in what must be known as autobiography it would appear affectation; besides, a change of style even thus unimportant may be agreeable to the reader, and to leave the theatre for a time may render a return to it perhaps pleasant, certainly less tiresome.

My father was Samuel Dunlap, from the town of Londonderry, in the north of Ireland. My mother's maiden name was Sargeant, and her mother's Stone, both natives of New-Jersey, and of English descent, as were all the original families in that part of New-Jersey which lies adjacent to its then capital. The names of Sargeant, Stone, Barron, Bell, Bloodgood, Freeman, Parker, Heriot, and others, testify this as fully as those of Van Rensselaer, Knickerbocker, Schermerhorne, Ten Broek, and others, show the origin of the New-York or

New-Netherland settlement in that great metropolis and its adjacent villages and islands of Bergen, Harlæm, Nassau, and Staaten.

My father "had been a soldier in his youth, and fought in famous battles;" and the name, originally Dunlop, is now well known in the world of literature by distinguished authors bearing it, and more generally as connected with Scott's Jenny Deans and the Dunlop cheeses.

Among my earliest recollections are those connected with sickness, and the relief derived from being carried in the arms of my father. I was an only child. When old enough, I listened to the story of his early life with intense interest. He told of crossing the deep with the army that came to wrest Canada from the French, for he was an officer in the forty-seventh, and carried the colours of *Wolfe's own*. He told of the difficulties they encountered in the great river St. Lawrence; of the attempts upon the fleet by the French fire-ships, and the gallant cheerings of the English tars, as they towed off from their destination and rendered harmless the blazing engines of destruction; of the landing and scaling the banks to gain the plains of Abraham; of his being wounded and carried off the field, and when suspended in his sash and borne to the ships, the pioneers throwing down their tools, supposing they saw their young commander disabled and leaving them, for Wolfe and his regiment wore that day one and the same plain uniform of scarlet without facings. In short, be-


fore I knew the meaning of the tale, I had heard all the circumstances of that important day, which fixed the destiny of this great continent of North America—which decided that, from Hudson's Bay to Mexico, the descendants of Englishmen, or those deriving from them their civil and religious principles, should spread the language of Shakspeare and Milton, and plant the independent spirit of Hampden and Pym throughout a moiety of the globe.

Another portion of my early education was not so favourable. Slavery had been introduced into the colonies and fostered by the commercial spirit of the mother country. Every family was served by negro slaves, and every kitchen swarmed with them. To be petted, indulged, spoiled, and have their example before his eyes, was the lot of the only child of the master of the family.

But, on the other and brighter side again, it was my happiness to be the favourite of a being of a very different kind, and to become attached, in early childhood, to an aged man who lived almost the life of a hermit, having neither wife nor child, in the midst of fruits and flowers *without* doors, and *within* surrounded by books. Thomas Bartow was a small thin old man, with straight gray hair, pale face, plain dark-coloured clothes, and stockings to suit—his well-polished, square-toed shoes were ornamented with little silver buckles, and his white cambric stock, neatly plaited, was fastened behind with a silver clasp. When he walked, a cane with an ivory head aided his steps, which halted

through age and rheumatism. His house stood at a corner of the market square—none other near it—and *the green* before it. It was surrounded on three sides by a garden with the best fruits our climate affords. His person, his house, his garden, were equally neat. I, and I alone, had the full command of the two last, and very nearly of the first.

By some arrangement with my indulgent parents, I was permitted to go every Sunday to this still more indulgent old gentleman. Invariably I found the venerable man alone, seated by a small table, his Bible or other book before him, and his spectacles on his nose—gladly lifted to welcome one who was yet untainted by the world which he seemed to shun. The boy was his companion at home, and his only companion when he rode or walked abroad. In winter, he gambolled about the room while the old man read : or was sent into the garret to bring down dried grapes, which hung on frames, carefully preserved after ripening on the vines in his garden ; or took the key of his library and selected books, to place on the table before him, that he might explain the pictures, or tell the stories. In summer, the favoured boy had the range of the garden and the choice of the fruit, with the same course of instruction from his books and his lips. Thus, before I could read, Pope's *Iliad*, Dryden's *Virgil*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, were familiar to me, as to the fable and incident, and every plate was patiently explained,




and the passages read or repeated. The good old man was repaid by the unsophisticated remarks of childhood, and the development of intellect in an infant mind. He laughed when the boy pronounced it false that Hector fled from Achilles, and remarked that the story was told by a Greek.

While every other house in the village, nominally a city, was encumbered by negroes, and every family degraded by the presence of slaves, his alone was free from the stain and the curse. Two domestics, both white and free, served, and were served by him. One respectable old female managed his household and culinary concerns, and was as neat, but not as free from frowns, as himself, and a rustic youth attended to the stable and old Sorrel, the garden, the wood-pile, and the square-toed shoes. In these domestics I remember no change. The good master made good servants. Among the evils of the war of the revolution, the greatest to me appeared the loss of my aged friend and companion. He retired from the scene of approaching conflict, when the British fleet appeared off Sandy Hook, and I never saw him again, except in my dreams. Through a long life his image has visited my hours of sleep—always changed—generally sick—or insane—or confined to his chamber and forbidding my approach to him. At his death, I was mentioned in his will.

My limits, and the reader's patience, will not

allow of details like these ; but it is my wish to notice the circumstances which caused the future pursuits and formed the character of the individual. Great Britain maintained an army in the colonies, and sometimes a regiment was quartered at the place of my nativity, sometimes distributed among the three towns of Brunswick, Elizabethtown, and Perth Amboy. My father's former profession drew the officers to his house, and they carried his son to the barracks. The 47th, in which he had served, were thus quartered, during the years 1773, 1774, and part of 1775 ; in the year last mentioned they were transported to New-York, and thence to Boston. Familiarity with military pomp and revelry, guns, drums, and all the allurements which such an artificial state presents, formed another part of my education.

Schools were as widely different then from what they now are, as every thing else has become. But reading was soon my delight, for my school was at Mr. Bartow's. I read every thing, skipping what I could not understand. The Fool of Quality made more impression on me than any other book, and the author's lesson respecting the good and evil propensities of our nature, the good and the naughty boy united in the same person, is often present in my mind to this day. In the year 1775, my father took me on a visit to New-York, and my recollections are vivid of what that city then was. I remember the preparations then making for the struggle which was to ensue.



War approached. The English troops had been withdrawn; the townsfolk of Perth Amboy were arming and forming themselves into a company of infantry. The boys imitated them. The militia from inland poured down to the coast, and filled the village—some *Continental*s (troops raised by order of Congress) passed through on their way to Canada. Their appearance and discipline were a contrast to the militia, and, in many respects, to the red-coated veterans to whom I had been accustomed. Some, in rifle frocks of brown linen, with trousers of the same—but well equipped, though more like hunters than soldiers—others in blue and red uniforms and white trousers, a black cap on the head, the cartouch-box and bayonet slung in black belts, and a round canteen for water, which, with a bright musket, formed the equipment of these fine young men, now marching to the north to be placed under Montgomery. The militia were an almost unarmed rabble, of every age and class.

The British appeared on the shore of Staaten Island, opposite Perth Amboy, and I was removed up the Raritan near to a small village called Piscataway, about two miles east of Brunswick. In the summer of 1776 I rambled about the fields, caught perch in the brooks, or sunfish in the mill-ponds, and was as happy as liberty from school and nearly all restraint could make me; but I read the whole of Shakspeare. I remember that

the historical plays were my favourites. I read every book that fell in my way.

The English army marched in hostile array through New-Jersey, and my father walked to the highest road passing through the village, to present himself to General Grant as an adherent to the cause of Britain. He took me with him, and I saw the soldiers plundering the houses, the women of the village trembling and weeping, or flying with their children: the men had retired to await the time of resurrection.

In many houses helpless old men or widowed females anxiously awaited the soldiers of monarchy. A scene of promiscuous pillage was in full operation. Here a soldier was seen issuing from a house armed with a frying-pan and gridiron, and hastening to deposit them with the store over which his helpmate kept watch. The women who had followed the army assisted their husbands in bringing the furniture from the houses, or stood as sentinels to guard the pile of kitchen utensils, or other articles, already secured and claimed by right of war. Here was seen a woman bearing a looking-glass, and here a soldier with a feather-bed—but as this was rather an inconvenient article to carry on a march, the ticking was soon ripped open, and a shower of goose feathers were seen taking higher flights than their original owners ever soared to. This scene was a lesson.

The family returned to Perth Amboy, and re-

mained 'during that winter surrounded by their English friends, and a medley of Highlanders, Hessians, and other German troops of every denomination. Wallenstein's camp, as described by Schiller, has since reminded me of the scenes of that winter.

Washington captured the Hessians at Trenton, and drove in the 17th, 55th, and 40th, regiments of English from Princeton. Amboy was thronged with troops, my father's house filled with officers, his kitchen and outhouses with their servants and soldiers. The grenadiers and light infantry of the army arrived in transport ships from Rhode Island, and lay off in the stream. They were landed on a fine winter's day, and, with all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," I saw them march into the rebellious country adjacent, attended by a long train of wagons to procure forage. I walked out of the village to see the last of the brilliant show, and tried to keep up with a tall grenadier of the 42d, whose height and beauty particularly attracted my attention. I returned and placed myself by a garret window, which commanded a view of the roads leading on the left to Brunswick, on the right to Woodbridge, that I might catch another view of the long procession, which I saw passing over the hill, and vanishing as it moved on towards the nearest village. I have a confused recollection that my thoughts, that day, were occupied altogether by the proud display I had witnessed, and the events

which might be passing in the interior ; and the sound of distant musketry gave activity to these thoughts—my mind was on the stretch. I took my way up the road by which the army had passed, and I met a wounded man returning, assisted by a less injured comrade. A little further on, stragglers were met returning, more or less hurt, and evincing pain. I next met the gigantic grenadier of the 42d—his musket on his left shoulder, his right hand bound up—he walked fast, but no longer looked like the hero I had admired. I turned about and followed him. It was soon known that the militia had assembled and were skirmishing with the regulars. In the evening it was known that this gallant military array were returning, their wagons loaded with wounded, instead of the booty they went in search of. By the fireside I heard the heavy rumbling of the wagons over the frozen earth, and the groans of those who were borne to the hospitals. I had now seen something of war.

In the spring of 1777, my father removed his family to New-York. I have spoken of New-York as it then was. After a year's interval I again went to school, and a worthy man, Thomas Steele, then a Quaker, once a soldier of artillery, an Englishman by birth, gave me all the instruction I ever received from such institutions. But I read Shakspeare again, and Pope's Homer for the first time, with recollections of my first instructor. I read every thing that I could lay hands on, until,

by the loss of my right eye from a wound inflicted by a missile, while playing with the boys after dinner, at Andrew Elliot's, my reading and education were for months interrupted. This memorable incident in my life occurred behind the house for years known as the Sailor's Snug Harbour, then the residence of Mr. Elliot, and a beautiful country-seat, surrounded by pleasure grounds. The north side of the house is the only part now bearing the shape of the original mansion. By this incident my application to drawing, one of my sources of pleasure, was suspended, and I was prohibited from visiting the theatre, as the glare of light was painful and injurious; but the manager, the surgeon-general, Doctor Beaumont, was one of my friendly attendants during this season of pain and long confinement.

Kotzebue, the German dramatist, has, in his autobiography, given a most animated description of the effects produced upon a young mind, by the first enjoyment of the splendid illusions, and the seductive excitement, of a theatrical exhibition. The crowd of well-dressed people, tier above tier, added to the novelty of the building and its decorations; the lights, the music, the drop-curtain, the mysterious anticipations of the wonders behind it; its rising, and the anxious attention of the audience, on the signal for the long-expected *something* to be developed; then the magic and moving pictures; the blooming personages of the drama, separated as by enchantment from those

to whose view they are exposed, and connected with them only in joy or sorrow—the creatures of another world, or of ages long gone by. The feelings which he describes were mine on that important evening, when I saw a play for the first time. It was Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*. The surgeon-general played Scrub, and colonels, majors, captains, and subalterns, personated the other characters. Thus, until deprived of this pleasure by the accident above-mentioned, I was occasionally indulged in going to the theatre in John Street, and enjoyed the delight of reading over the plays after seeing them acted, and recalling the actors to my mind's eye.

My health being restored, I passed my life, until the age of seventeen, attending to my father's store, and in desultory reading, drawing with Indian ink from such good prints as I could obtain, and finally attempting to paint portraits of my friends with crayons or pastills. I likewise began two dramas ; one on the story of Abon Hassan, in the *Arabian Nights*, and the other a tragedy on some incidents in Persian history. At this period, 1783, the preliminaries of peace opened the way for a return to my native place. I was permitted to visit New-Jersey and Philadelphia.

For eight years of my life the name of Washington had been familiar to my ear, though surrounded by his enemies. I had seen the Howes, the Clintons, and the Carletons of the British army, and the renegades, Brooke Watson and Benedict Ar-

nold. My attempts at painting attracted the attention of the second-named commander-in-chief of the English forces, who, with other generals and a train of aids, visited the young aspirant.

When Washington was first heard of, his name was coupled with sarcasms or taunts, but with the occasional alleviation of "He was with Braddock, and did good service, though a provincial," and sometimes the acknowledgment—"He saved the remains of the army from destruction." After the Trenton and Princeton affairs, Englishmen spoke of him with respect. His name grew with my growth—it was by-and-by in every mouth—every transaction of moment was connected with it. After the capture of Cornwallis, awe and admiration were constantly connected with the character of Washington.

I was now to see this great man. Congress were in session at Princeton. The commander-in-chief had his head-quarters at the house of Mr. Berrien, at Rocky Hill, within two miles. In a solitary walk, on the road between Princeton and Trenton, while ascending a hill, a party of military horsemen suddenly appeared from the opposite side. They gained the height, and their figures were relieved darkly by a light and brilliant sky. They were all dressed in the well-known old staff uniform of the United States, blue and buff, with the black and white cockade, marking the union with France, in their cocked hats, which were worn, as generally at that time in the

American army, with the greatest breadth (to use a sea phrase), fore and aft, so as to screen the eyes; they were gallantly equipped and mounted; each had the glittering gold epaulet on either shoulder, and at first view all appeared equal, and all above the ordinary height. But the centre figure was the tallest of the group, and I knew that I saw in him the man on whom every thought centred. The eyes of the company were turned upon me as they approached. The salutation of taking off my cocked hat was performed with a feeling which probably my face expressed. Instantly the salute was returned in the same manner by the chief, and every hat of the company was lowered with its waving plume to me. They passed, and I gazed after them. It was a precious moment. I had seen Washington.

At the hospitable mansion of Mr. John Van Horne, at Rocky Hill, where I passed some weeks, amusing myself with my flute, my music-books, and my crayons, I was established within a mile of head-quarters. The General and Mrs. Washington were frequent visitors. In his daily rides, he usually stopped, and passed an hour with the family. Thus I became, as far as my youth and admiration permitted, an associate with the greatest man of the age. My attempts at painting, miserable as they were, attracted attention, and I was stimulated by words of encouragement. I was invited to head-quarters, and there met at breakfasts and dinners the eminent men who then legislated

for and guided the councils of the country. I must not indulge in these reminiscences. The portraits I painted at Mr. Van Horne's led to the painting of the General and Mrs. Washington, and head-quarters for a time was almost my home.

After a visit to Philadelphia, which I saw for the first time, having for my companion a young officer of Lee's legion, I returned to New-York in the month of November, 1783; and, on the 4th of May, 1784, embarked for England, in the good ship *Betsey*, Thomas Watson commander, with letters to Benjamin West, and for the purpose of studying the arts of design.

To Benjamin West, and the painters of that day, a more ample notice is due than comports with the intentions of this chapter, which is to give some idea of the facilities which I had for obtaining that species of knowledge, which might form a good director of a theatre. It is only as such, and as a dramatic writer, that I am entitled to notice in a history of the American stage.

During the summer of 1784, frequent visits to Colman's theatre made me familiar with many of the comedians belonging to the winter theatres, and with the pieces then popular, as well as those introduced as novelties, by the dramatists of the day. Colman the younger's first drama *Two to One* was then brought out, and the first recollection I have of the elegant John Palmer is as the speaker of the prologue to it, in which, in allusion to the

son's treading in the steps of his father, is the line—

And dunce the second follows dunce the first.

Mrs. Oldmixon, then Miss George, is vividly impressed on my memory, in the character of Tippet ; the elder Bannister, in the man who derives his consequence from the amount of his debts, and Bannister, jun. in the hero of the piece, are before me. But the face and manner of Edwin in Dicky Ditto, who would rather be treated civilly by the debtor he comes to dun than receive his money and be told to leave the presence of quality customers, is perhaps the most distinct of the whole.

O'Keefe produced farce after farce, some in two acts and some in five. *The Agreeable Surprise*, with the Lingo of Edwin, and the Cowslip of Mrs. Wells, can never be forgotten ; and even great Mrs. Webb, in Mrs. Cheshire, and that automaton Davies, are stamped on the tablet of my brain. *The Young Quaker*, with Palmer's Sadboy and Edwin's Clod, might be dwelt upon with more delight to the writer than the reader.

Wilson, as Rory, the blacksmith of Gretna Green, and Parsons, in every comic piece brought out, are among the strong recollections of the pleasures of that day.

A man's companions form, as well as mark, his character. Samuel L. Mitchill passed through London to Edinburgh. He was my former inti-

mate at home. Wright Post came to London, and remained about two years, studying and residing with Sheldon. Our intimacy was of the strictest kind. Young officers who had served in America were too much my companions. Raphael West, the eldest of the great painter's sons, was another intimate associate. When my friend Mitchill returned an M. D. from Edinburgh, in 1786, we renewed our intimacy, and made a pedestrian tour, of which hereafter.

At the opening of the winter theatres, my first visit was to old Drury, Garrick's Drury-lane. I went in at half-price, and Messrs. Smith and Bensley were on the stage, in the Lord Townley and Manly of *The Provoked Husband*. The first impression was very unfavourable. The discordant nasal utterance of Bensley, and the sharp tone of Smith, almost disgusted me. When Miss Farren as Lady Townley appeared, all was enchantment. Suett's 'Squire Richard and Parsons' Sir Francis are remembered, but the remainder of the *dramatis personæ* fade from recollection. Except the Lady Townley, I have seen all better in America.

The first play I saw at Covent Garden was *As You Like It*. Miss Younge was Rosalind herself; Lewis, no more than a common or passable Orlando—Lewis, the best of all gentlemen comedians! Henderson was the Jaques, and he was in every thing the best performer on the stage at that time in all the higher branches of the drama, Lewis only excepted. Quick was the clown, and

Mrs. Wilson the Audrey. Quick was a great comedian, but I feel confident that the Touchstone of Mr. Hilson is better than Quick's then was.

My first opportunity of seeing Mrs. Siddons was in *Isabella*. My opinion of this transcendent actress has been given. At this time she was in her prime, and her face and figure were as perfect as her acting. Smith was the Biron; Palmer the Villeroy; Barrymore the Carlos. Mrs. Siddons' Lady Macbeth was played with Smith's Macbeth and Kemble's Macduff; her majestic Constance with Kemble's King John, Bensley's Hubert, Smith's Bastard; her Desdemona with Kemble's Othello, dressed in a coat, waistcoat, and breeches of scarlet, white silk stockings, and a long military queue; Bensley's Iago, in a blue uniform; and the rest of the characters conformably. John Bannister was the Cassio, and Dodd the Roderigo—Dodd, the *beau ideal* of fops of the old school. Mrs. Hopkins was the Emilia. Mrs. Melmoth played it better. Mrs. Siddons' Grecian Daughter is alone remembered when the performance of that tragedy is thought of. In Mrs. Beverley she was as true to nature in the amiable, as in the sublime and terrible of Lady Macbeth and Constance. Kemble was the Beverley, and Bensley the Lewson; but Palmer's Stukely surpassed all the performances of the male part of the *dramatis personæ*.

Of Mr. Henderson, I will only remark that his Hamlet was then the best in London, though I

doubt not that Mr. Kemble's surpassed it in after-years. Mr. Henderson's Leonatus Posthumus in *Cymbeline*, Horatius in *The Roman Father*, and Sir Giles Overreach in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, are remembered as being perfection, and his Falstaff as the only Falstaff worth remembering; Cooke's being professedly a copy of it.

Of Mr. Lewis I have spoken. His Mercutio, Michael Perez, Ranger, and Sir Charles Racket, have had no equal.

The same must be said of Mr. Palmer's Young Wilding; and when I remember his Bobadil, I can doubt the tradition which says Woodward's was better. It is only that my experience of acting and actors may be known that I risk being wearisome to the general reader. To those who are versed in stage history, such recollections may be interesting. To all who remember (and who that has read can forget?) the comedy of *The Twelfth Night*, I may hope to bring pleasing images of the past perfection of casting a play, by detailing the names of those performers who were combined in its representation when I saw it at Drury Lane: Olivia, Miss Farren; Viola, Mrs. Jordan; Sir Andrew, Mr. Dodd; Sir Toby, Mr. Palmer; Malvolio, Mr. Bensley; Fool, Mr. Suett; Sebastian, Mr. Bannister, junior.

The picture presented, when the two knights are discovered with their pipes and potations, as exhibited by Dodd and Palmer, is ineffaceable. The driveller, rendered more contemptible by the

effect of liquor—the actor's thin legs in scarlet stockings, his knees raised nearly to his chin, by placing his feet on the front cross-piece of the chair (the degraded drunkards being seated with a table, tankards, pipes, and candles, between them), a candle in one hand and pipe in the other, endeavouring in vain to bring the two together ; while, in representing the swaggering Sir Toby, Palmer's gigantic limbs outstretched seemed to indicate the enjoyment of that physical superiority which nature had given him, even while debasing it by the lowest of all vices.

The School for Scandal I saw played in the author's own theatre, and *The Critic* in the same, with the original cast.

Mrs. Jordan's *debut* and successive characters were all witnessed when she was as perfect in figure as in skill. Her singing was sweet, not powerful. In Wycherly's Peggy, and in Bickerstaff's Priscilla Tomboy, and *The Virgin Unmasked*, she was the model on which others have since obtained favour and reputation by the greater or less perfection of their copies. Nothing could be more sweet than her Viola ; but, in the higher walks of the drama, though always good, she was not the highest. Mrs. Abington *had been*—was still, in point of skill and spirit ; but time, the inexorable enemy of beauty, had rendered it impossible for the spectator to believe that the matronly embonpoint of the actress belonged to Rosalind or Portia, Lady Teazle or Violante. Mrs. Mattocks

was old, and (to use a phrase of my friend C. B. Brown's) "very remote from beauty." She still sustained a spirited chambermaid's part where youth or comeliness were not required. Mrs. Wrihten was yet in her prime, and those powers which gave her an eminent place as an actress and singer at Drury Lane were little diminished when, as Mrs. Pownall, she joined the American stage.

Miss Brunton's reception I have already mentioned, when speaking of her as Mrs. Merry. Pope and Holman were seen in their prime. *The Heiress* of Burgoyne was seen in its first cast—King, Parsons, Palmer, Miss Farren, and Miss Pope, giving a force to the elegant drama of the unfortunate general, which had not been imparted by the author. Miss Phillips (afterwards, or, perhaps at that time, Mrs. Crouch), by her musical talents and most perfect beauty, supported the tender or serious portion of the play.

If I were to speak of the merits of King, Parsons, Mrs. Wrihten, Miss Pope, and many others, I might fill pages, but doubt if they would be read with the pleasure the recollection causes to the writer.

In the autumn of 1786, Samuel Latham Mitchell, having finished his studies in Edinburgh, and taken his degree of M.D., returned to London on his way home. He immediately sought me, and, soon after his arrival, proposed a pedestrian tour to the University of Oxford. Wright Post had returned home, or probably he would have

joined us. We packed up what we deemed sufficient clothing in one trunk, and despatched it to the Angel Inn, Oxford, with a direction purporting that it was to be delivered to the bearer of the key.

Having determined our line of march by the map, we left London on a rainy morning in the month of November, each equipped with an overcoat and boots, and became travellers in that dreary month, "when Englishmen hang and drown themselves." But there was no dreariness for us; the cold gray sky and black muddy roads were "*couleur de rose*;" and when night came, and the landlady of a very indifferent inn, with her arms "akimbo," would have sent us on further in wet and darkness, after examining and condemning our appearance, it only excited mirth, for we knew, that we bore the *passee partout* to the kitchen fire, and that our key would open the best parlour and best bedroom for our accommodation. Some travellers, who were journeying in broad-wheeled wagons to London, and had gained possession of the kitchen hearth, made room for us, and, while drying our clothes, and waiting for a fire to be kindled in the parlour, afforded us ample amusement. All was new—all was full of interest. We ate heartily and slept soundly. Hunger sauced our supper—fatigue ensured rest.

We trudged with light hearts, through heavy roads, at the rate of thirty miles a day, taking refreshment when most wanted, or most easily ob-

tained, and enjoying every incident which chance threw in our way. We gained a view of the beautiful city of Oxford about mid-day, and the key of our trunk, aided by the key to the landlord's heart, soon made us comfortable at the Angel Inn.

We had letters to professors and students. The curiosities and libraries were shown to us. We dined in the halls. We drank port wine in the chambers of the students—and, after some days of enjoyment (for two Americans were two lions at that day, and were stared at and caressed accordingly), we took staff in hand and walked to Blenheim, to view the wonders of that palace, one of the rewards bestowed on Churchill, the Wellington of his day. Woodstock and Blenheim would afford pages of recollections; even the works of Rubens alone, if pictures were the subject of my book, might detain the reader until he tired of descriptions of that which cannot be described, the works of the painter. We walked in the dark back to Oxford.

Of the many who were our companions, or who showed us civilities, only one is distinctly remembered, and that one only as connected with the theatre. Mr. Bland, a brother of Mrs. Jordan's, was then a student at Oxford. He is remembered as a modest, retiring youth. Another brother of this charming actress, it will be seen, was thrown in my way, when my way was far removed from the paths of Milton and Addison. The brothers were very dissimilar, and I hope my Oxford acquaint-

ance has passed through life under more favourable auspices than those which governed the fate of him whom I knew as a member of the New-York company of Thespians.

After learning as much of University life as a week's residence could teach us, we prepared to return to London by the same mode of travelling as that which had so pleasantly brought us to the seat of the Muses and loyalty. Determined to see as much as possible in our journey, we planned another route for our return to the metropolis, one which should lead us through the royal residence of Windsor, which, although frequently visited by me, being a summer abode of Mr. West, and possessing the charm of a royal collection of paintings, was new to my companion.

One incident of our pedestrian wayfaring I will record here: it made a strong impression on my companion, and a stronger on me, as connected with the scenes of my childhood. As the sun was rising one morning, and cheering our walk with his beams—for it did not rain all the time—as we ascended a hill, and looked forward to descry the welcome Red Lion or Black Bull of some breakfasting place, we saw a fellow footpad come from a turnip-field, and slowly make his way up the road before us. We were soon alongside, and, as was ever our wont, accosted him. But first a description of the new actor in the scene:—He was a short, sturdy man, but bent by the weight of years: he wore what had been regimentals, but tattered

and torn : and the defacings of time, and hard wear and tear, had removed the facings which might denote the corps to which he belonged. His military cap covered his thin gray hair, which was no longer plaistered with tallow and covered with flour, in emulation of his captain's perfumes and powder. The worsted lace, which makes the poor soldier strut with all the air of a commander—this mockery of pomp and pride—was gone from his threadbare and patched habiliment. He bore on his back something between a pack and a knapsack ; and with a jack-knife he was paring a turnip, " which ever and anon he gave his " mouth, who, not " therewith offended," received the present graciously.

" A cold breakfast, fellow-traveller."

" Yes, your honour, but a keen appetite. This is my first mouthful since yesterday morning, a long fast for a long march."

" Such is often a soldier's lot."

" A poor man's lot."

" A soldier is never poor : the paymaster is his banker, and he finds forage in the fields of the enemy when the quartermaster is not at hand."

" Bless you, young gentleman, you talk as if you had seen soldiers, if not service ; *that* you are too young for : I have seen and done some ; but I'm too old now—no longer a soldier—though I have borne the musket many a year."

" And does your king and country leave you now

in this poor plight, and without wherewithal to buy a mouthful of bread?"

"No—God bless his majesty! he takes care of me, though I can no longer fight for him."

"Care of you! It does not appear."

"Better care than I have taken of myself—that's the truth of it. I received my certificate from the war-office, and money to bear me to quarters for life; but when I came to present my papers, behold I had lost them! I had spent my money; and now, without a sixpence. I am on my way to the war-office at Whitehall again, for a renewal of billeting orders."

We had seen instances enough of imposture to be wary; and though the old man spoke frankly, and with a soldier's honesty in appearance, we chose to question him further before relieving his wants, although fully disposed to share with him in the breakfast we were approaching. The question was asked.

"Where have you served?"

"In America." We now thought if he played false, we should soon detect him.

"In what part?"

"God bless you, everywhere! From the St. Lawrence to the Ohio; from north to south, and back again."

"What regiment did you belong to?"

"The forty-seventh—Waller's own." I now thought the old man was coming near my home—

he must be soon known for false or true. I eagerly asked,

"Where did you serve with the forty-seventh?"

"At Quebec," said the veteran, who now stopped, looked erect, and "every inch" a soldier: "on the plains of Abraham, with Wolfe; in the woods of Pennsylvania, with Braddock; at Bunker's Hill, with Howe; at Bennington and Saratoga, with Burgoyne." At all these places I knew the regiment had fought, and at the last been surrendered, with their comrades, to my undisciplined countrymen.

"And before you went to Boston, where did you quarter?"

"In New-Jersey: I was stationed in the barracks at Perth Amboy; Col. Nesbitt commanded us then."

"And your major—your captain—"

"Major Smelt: I was in Captain Craig's company of light infantry." The old man ran over the names of the officers, who had taken me on their knees in my father's house, without seeming to enter into my motives for inquiry.

"Do you remember an officer of the name of Dunlap?"

"Not then: in the French war he was my lieutenant; he was at Amboy, but not then in the army."

"What would you say if I told you that I am his son?" He now seemed to understand the motives of my queries, and to be convinced that my

assertion was a fact from the questions I had put ; for he instantly clasped my hand, gazed in my face, and after "No," and "Yes," seemed to be overcome by recollections, made more vivid by the train previously excited ; and he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, while I added, "Come—my father's old comrade shall not want a breakfast." And we proceeded together on our search for an inn. It was his turn now to inquire, and mine to answer.

This has so much the air of romance that I could scarcely expect credit, if my companion, now no more, had not often related the occurrence to the many of his numerous friends who survive him. That in the land of my fathers, three thousand miles from that of my birth, I should thus stumble upon one who had been familiar with the scenes of my infancy—had been my father's companion in arms and in triumph, and shared the defeats of those I so well remembered in my childhood, when they had been opposed to the same provincials who assisted them in their Canadian wars and victories, was certainly very singular ; but it is an old remark, that the romance of real life outstrips the invention of poets ; and if this rough and war-worn veteran could have told all he had witnessed, from Braddock's defeat to the surrender at Saratoga, the tale might have vied in incident, perhaps in interest, with the best which have been invented of battles lost and won. It is needless to say, that this encounter rendered the

soldier's journey to the war-office easy. We proceeded to Windsor.

Next day, after breakfast, we repaired to the chapel, and saw the king and royal family; and then gaily, with limbs inured to pedestrian travel, passed by the two-and-twenty milestones between Oxford and Hyde Park Corner.

Of the circumstances which, after my return to my native country, led to my connexion with the drama, the reader has already been informed; and now return we to the theatre, plays, players, and management. Between three and four years I had been principally a resident in the metropolis of Great Britain, at the most critical time of a man's life—between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two. I was not fitted for the best society of this great nation: I sought companions like myself; and either young Americans, or those connected with America, were my associates. Of arts and artists—prints, pictures, and painters—I may on some other occasion speak. I returned home happily with dispositions favourable to mental improvement, and fell among young men who had, like myself, ambition, and the desire to cultivate the field of knowledge. The Friendly Club and the Philological Society counteracted the effects of the Bucks' Lodges of London, and the Friars' Society of New-York; and, with the example and friendly intercourse of men heretofore mentioned, another hue was added to the many-coloured,

changeable habit which conceals or unveils the character of man.

With little knowledge of the world, and none of theatres and actors except as seen from before the curtain, I was little fitted for the task which I had undertaken. Of plays and the merits of their performers I had some knowledge—more than most men of my age. I had read all the dramatic authors of England, and seen their best works represented by the best English players. Of music and operas I was profoundly ignorant—as ignorant as all but professors of music are. I could play *a first* or *second* on a flute, and had heard all the singers and performers who were before the English public from 1784 to 1788; and Mike Kelly is my authority for saying they were among the best of Europe. I had witnessed Signor O'Kelly's *debut* as Lionel at Drury Lane, after he had figured in Italy and Germany, and imitated the Abbé Da Ponte in his own opera; but my ear for music was such, that I preferred his friend Jack Johnstone (Irish Johnstone), who was first singer at Covent Garden, to Signor O'Kelly. Perhaps I was influenced by Johnstone's acting, which was better than Kelly's, or by his tall and handsome person. Then, again, my taste was for simple melody, and I received more pleasure from the airs in *Rosina* than from all the bravuras of the Italian opera. I preferred Mrs. Crouch to Madame Mara or Mrs. Billington, and don't recollect any delight from an

Italian singer until I heard Madame Malibran. My object in saying this is to prove my ignorance and want of taste, and I doubt not I shall be readily credited on that score. I was not quite so low as the manager of a provincial company, who threatened the horns in his orchestra that he would discharge them because they did not sound as long as the fiddlers.

Nothing can be further from simplicity than the combinations of Handel; and yet the delight, the thrilling pleasure, experienced on hearing the complicated mass of voice and instrument at Westminster Abbey was such as is never to be forgotten. I doubt whether the scientific European ear was more enraptured by the sublime "Hallelujah" of the Messiah than my uninstructed Yankee organ; and yet I ought not to doubt it, for knowledge has in all things the advantage over ignorance.

My knowledge of music gave me no advantages as the manager of a theatre; neither had I sufficient skill or science as a painter to be of much service in directing the scenic department. I end as I began, with the avowal that I was not fitted for the task I had undertaken.

CHAPTER XXII.

Salaries and Expenses — Miss Westray and Miss E. Westray — Holcroft — Mr. and Mrs. Barrett — Yellow Fever of 1798 — The Theatre of New-York not opened until the 3d of December, 1798 — Saved by bringing out *The Stranger* — Biographical Notice of Kotzebue.

THE theatre of New-York had now but one director or manager—a circumstance which had not occurred in the United States before. An estimate of the expenses of the theatre at this time, 1798-9, will perhaps be acceptable to the general reader, and useful to those concerned in similar establishments. The salaries to actors and actresses, as follows, amount to 480 dollars weekly, viz. Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, 50; Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, 45—the first 20, the second, 25; Mrs. Oldmixon, 37; Mr. Cooper, 25; Mrs. Melmoth, 20; Mr. Tyler, 20; Mr. Jefferson, 23; Mr. Martin, 18 (and for superintending the stage and making properties, 7 more); Mr. Hallam, jun., 16; Mrs. Hogg, 14; Mr. Hogg, 13; Miss Westray, 13; Miss E. Westray, 12; Mr. Lee, 12 as performer and property-man; two message-carriers (each 8), 16; Mrs. Seymour, 16; Mr. Seymour, 9; Mr. Miller, 12; Miss Hogg, 4;

estimate for three others, 54 ; Mrs. Collins, 12 ; with supernumeraries, 32. To this was added a wretched prompter of the name of Hughes, at 10, and an intelligent box-office keeper, Mr. Joseph Falconer, at 14. Dressers, 20 ; orchestra, 140 (consisting of Mr. James Hewett, as leader ; Messrs. Everdel, Nicolai, Samo, Henri, Ulshoeffter, Librecheki, Pellesier, Dupuy, Gilfert, Nicolai, jun., Adet, Hoffman, and Dangle). Other expenses were estimated thus:—Lights, 109 ; Labourers, 24 ; Doors and Constables, 50 ; Cleaning, 5 ; printing, 68 ; properties, 6 ; wardrobe, 15 ; fires, 15 ; Mr. Ciceri and his department (the scenery and painting, not including materials), 60 ; rent, 145 ; amounting to 1161 dollars, without including any remuneration for the personal services of the manager.

As Mr. Hodgkinson had repeatedly said that if he staid in New-York, it would be as an actor only, the manager offered him by letter, the 2d of June, 1798, a salary of 50 dollars for himself, and the same amount for his wife ; and the salary of 14 as heretofore given to Mrs. Brett. This would have made the amount of expenses 1271 dollars ; and in the same offer it was stated that the expenses of the benefits of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson were to be estimated at 385 dollars, which, as the theatre opened only three times a week, would have been 33 dollars 75 cents under the actual expense of the night—probably much more, as never estimate yet came up to the real cost in such cases. The offer was treated as an insult.

Miss Westray and Miss E. Westray, with a younger sister, afterwards a distinguished actress as Mrs. Twaits (as the two first were and are as Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Darley) were at this time under the protection of their mother and their father-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, who were added to the company.

The first display of the histrionic talents of Miss Westray and Miss E. Westray, that we recollect, was on the 14th of June, 1798, when Holcroft's comedy of *The Deserted Daughter*, then very popular, was played for their mutual benefit, the elder sister representing the character of Sarsnet, and the younger Joanna. The receipts were 559 dollars.

Holcroft, the author of this and many other successful comedies and novels, is well known to the reading public. He was one of those energetic characters who rise in despite of, and superior to, circumstances. By birth thrown in the lowest class of European society, a beggar and a stable-boy, he escaped the vices and burst the bonds of ignorance by mental effort. He educated himself, and, although a sturdy oppositionist to every abuse, social or political, no power, not even that of the mighty aristocracy of Britain, could put him down. As a politician and reformer, he was accused of treason. He surrendered himself and was acquitted. As a dramatist, he combated abuses manfully; but the managers of the Royal theatres at length dared not bring forward his plays as

such. As a novelist, he gained the attention of the public and served the cause of truth. He attacked the vices of players in one of his novels (he had himself been one of the fraternity); the characters were acknowledged, and the cap made to fit by several performers, in consequence of which the actors of Covent Garden had a meeting, and agreed to show their displeasure to the author by withholding their society from him—ordaining that he among them who should be guilty of speaking to the author of the offensive novel (the author of *The Road to Ruin*, and other comedies by which they subsisted—for what is the actor without the author?) should be “sent to Coventry;” but the sturdy reformer pursued his way undaunted, triumphing over the combination of cabinet ministers and green-room dignitaries.

While the heart sickens at the contemplation of the perverted talents of men who are born to fortune, and receive every aid from education—while we turn with disgust from the cant and hypocrisy of the thousands who, though blessed with every good springing from the social system, devote every effort to the advancement of self—we are relieved and refreshed by studying the lives of such men as have seen the beauty of virtue while apparently doomed to crime, and, from the regions of poverty and darkness, have by their unassisted efforts soared to that light and power, which have enabled them to overthrow the giants of the earth, and relieve their fellow-men from ignorance and

thraldom. When we trace the progress of Franklin from the hour he entered the city of Philadelphia, unnoticed and unknown, and made his first meal without table or house in the streets of the metropolis which has erected statues to his memory, to the day he dictated terms to the ministry of Great Britain ; or when we accompany Holcroft as a beggar-boy soliciting alms for his parents — as a menial in the stables of Newmarket, rejoicing that he could obtain food and clothing — and then rising to the useful occupation of shoemaking, and thereby obtaining the scanty means of educating himself ; seeing through all these states of gloom the star which promised him the power he aspired to, the power to benefit mankind ;— when we see such examples — and they are to be found both in ancient and modern times — we feel revived hope and renewed strength, as the assurance is given that man will not ever remain the thing he is. But we must descend from our hopes for the future to the plain statement of the past, retaining and cherishing those feelings which such views and hopes inspire.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson having, as before stated, left the country, the manager entered into a negotiation with Mr. G. L. Barrett for himself and Mrs. Barrett, which was followed by an engagement for the ensuing season. A few passages from the letters which effected the engagement may not be thought irrelevant. Mr. Barrett writes from Boston, dated June 16th, 1798 : “ With

regard to business, I cannot suppose you *mean* any but the *first* in each *department*.”—“Should we meet, I hope you will have no objection to my regulating the stage business of Mrs. B. and my own.” To this the manager answered, “The company will be much lessened from what it has been, though I hope no less efficient. But the diminution of numbers, without which I have no hope of keeping the charges within those bounds which can alone give hope of success, renders it necessary that the members of the company should adjust themselves to its exigencies, and occasionally do such parts as in an over-abounding corps would fall into other hands. This has been agreed to by Mr. Cooper and others.”—“I shall keep the direction of the business, the choice of plays, their cast, &c., entirely in my own hands. I expect usefulness, to the best of your ability, and I trust that you may expect justice.” “In regulating stage business, I shall pay just deference to your opinion, and I think it not improbable that your knowledge may be rendered serviceable to me, and if so, by mutual agreement, beneficial to you (though I by no means at present propose such an agreement).”—“I would wish it clearly to be understood, that while I direct the stage, my opinion must be paramount to any other.”

Mr. Barrett was at this time past the meridian of life, tall, well formed, and skilful in fencing and other exercises. Though his figure was good for the stage, his face was far from it; round in its

general form, and without one prominent feature; nose short, eyes blue, and complexion fair by nature. He had been manager of the Norwich theatre, England, and sustained the first line of business in some of the other provincial theatres. In Boston he had been a favourite until Hodgkinson superseded him. In the comparison he could not stand for a moment. He is thus mentioned by Bernard :—After giving an account of a suit at law, which he had at Plymouth (England), with a Mr. Wolfe, he adds, “ One of his accomplices in this affair was Mr. G. L. Barrett, who, when called upon for his defence, raised some laughter in the court by saying that ‘ he had the pleasure of being an old friend and acquaintance of mine for many years.’ About fifteen years after this, he rode up to my door in Boston (America) in a coach, and asked me if I would do him a last favour. I said, ‘ yes.’ ‘ Well, then,’ he added, ‘ John, I am dying ; when I am dead, put me under the turf, and I will never trouble you again.’ He kept his word and I mine.”

Mrs. Barrett was a tall and commanding figure, and, though neither young nor beautiful, she possessed a countenance denoting mind, and her acting fulfilled the promise of her personal appearance.

Upon these performers the manager of the New-York theatre had to rely for a portion of Mr. Hodgkinson's and Mrs. Johnson's business. Mr. Cooper was his support in tragedy, and in low

comedy he justly relied upon Mr. Jefferson; Mr. Hogg was yet little known. Mr. Bates was engaged to fill an important portion of comedy business, for which he was found inadequate.

It is well known that September is the month when New-York is filled with visiters, and from that time until the commencement of winter is the harvest-time for those who have exhibitions of any kind, and especially for managers of theatres. It was intended that the New-York theatre should open early in September; but in this the manager was disappointed, and he lost in this first year of his direction the whole of that month, with October and November. He did not commence until the 3d of December, after the city had been desolated by pestilence, and its remaining citizens had become little disposed to seek amusement or incur expense.

The yellow fever of this year commenced in Philadelphia earlier than in New-York. Wignell, after the Baltimore season, carried his company to Annapolis.

On the 5th of September, 1798, the manager of the New-York theatre received a letter, written by his three friends, E. H. Smith, C. B. Brown, and William Johnson, who were then in New-York, and residing together in Pine Street: from which we make the following extracts. The first is Brown's.

"Your letter was very acceptable and seasonable; it cheered us poor solitary beings, with the

plaguy fever at our doors, in our cupboards, and in our beds.

"Johnson and I are pretty well ; but E. H. S., by midnight sallings forth, sudden changes of temperature, fatigue, and exposure to a noonday sun, is made sick : perhaps it would not have been so if this demon had not lurked in the air. To-morrow it is hoped that he will be able to answer your questions, as to the prevalence and comparative malignity of this disease, himself.

"This afternoon I revised the last sheet of *Wieland*. It will form a handsome volume of 300 pages. Some ten or twelve have been added since you last saw it.

"I have written something of the history of *Carwin*, which I will send. I have desisted for the present from the prosecution of this plan, and betook myself to another, which I mean to extend to the size of *Wieland*, and to finish by the end of this month, provided no yellow fever disconcert my schemes.

"Your letter bespeaks you to be happy. Why is it so ? I just now asked W. J. He says you are constitutionally cheerful ; and having gotten rid of a certain pestering coadjutor, your constitution in that respect is at liberty to show itself." The second extract is Johnson's :—

"W. J. is, as you conjecture, doing nothing ; not absolutely nothing, but nothing interesting to a 'philosopher :' yet he rejoices in the works and fame of his friends. Charles feels all the joy and

parental exultation of an author, having this day been delivered, by the aid of H. Caritat and T. and J. Swords, of a handsome duodecimo, the offspring of that fertile brain which has already engendered two more volumes. This borders upon the *prodigious*—300 pages in a month! yet he is neither in a delirium or a fever. What an admirable antidote is philosophy! As to fever, it is a being of such unaccountable origin, such amazing attributes, and such inexplicable operations, that I deliver it over to the doctor, to be treated *secundem artem*—that is to say, according to his trade.

“ I rejoice that you are happy at Amboy ; I leave the philosopher Charles to search for the causes.”
The next is from Smith :—

“ These gay friends of mine have so covered the paper with their gambols, that nothing but coldness and conclusion, dulness and death-heads, are left for me.

“ Had you seen me extended on my bed yesterday, rejecting (alas, the while!) half a dozen applications from the sick, and confined to pills and potions, you would have trembled for the safety of your poor philosopher. To-day, however, I have **sitten** up till this hour ; and if the day be fair, to-morrow shall resume my customary functions.”
After some account of the prevailing pestilence,
he signs the letter,

“ By order of the Com.,

“ E. H. SMITH (this day 27).

“ Tuesday noon, Sept. 4th, 1798.”

The plague continued to prevail. The workmen employed under the direction of Mr. Ciceri in preparing the theatre left the place through fear. On the 18th, the manager received a letter from C. B. Brown and William Johnson, saying that they have in the house a young Italian, Signor Scandella, a physician, dangerously ill of the fever, and under the care of Elihu. In answer, they are pressed to come to Amboy. The next news was that Smith was ill. On the 20th, the two surviving friends wrote that Elihu H. Smith was no more ; C. B. Brown sick, but recovering ; and both determined as soon as possible to leave the "hateful city." They joined their friend on the 24th.

Early in November, the manager returned to New-York, and proceeded to prepare the theatre for use, Ciceri having finished the dome, which was at the last season in a sad, unsightly state.

Money was wanted to bring on the members of the company, and by great exertion obtained and forwarded. On Monday, December the 3d, the theatre was opened with *The School for Scandal* and *High Life Below Stairs* ; in the house, 730 dollars. Nothing could be more unpropitious than such an opening. The city was a city of mourning, and the winter already begun. But the step was taken that made it necessary to proceed.

On the 5th, Mr. Bates and Mrs. Oldmixon were brought out in the opera of *Inkle and Yarico*, and the receipts were 267 dollars. The third night of the week, Mrs. Oldmixon was taken ill when dress-

ing for Ophelia : there was no performance, and the week's receipts amounted to only 997 dollars.

Happily, the manager had not been idle as an author. The fame of *The Stranger*, then playing in London, had reached New-York ; and, after his return to the city, having got possession of a wretched publication in which the plot and part of the dialogue of Kotzebue's play were given, in language neither German nor English, he wrote a play founded on these materials ; and, producing his manuscript without telling any one but Mr. Cooper his secret, the parts were distributed, the play studied, rehearsed, and brought before the public on the Monday of the second week of the season. The success of this piece alone enabled the author to keep open the theatre. It was thus cast :—The Stranger, Mr. Cooper ; Francis, Mr. Martin ; Baron Steinfort, Mr. Barrett ; Solomon, Mr. Bates ; Peter, Mr. Jefferson ; Mrs. Haller, Mrs. Barrett ; Chambermaid, Mrs. Seymour ; Ironess Steinfort, Mrs. Hallam. Mr. Cooper was well studied in the principal character, and produced great effect ; Mrs. Barrett was powerful and touching ; Martin was correct ; and Bates and Jefferson gave every opportunity for the lovers to amuse (for such the comic portion of the play really was) to enjoy themselves.

The author had adopted the names from the English play-bills, as well as the name by which Kotzebue's play was performed in London, and the managers were at liberty to suppose that *that which*

delighted them had been sanctioned by a London audience. The bills only announced "*The Stranger*." The success of this piece, undoubtedly owing to the merits of Kotzebue, determined the manager to study German, which he so far mastered in a very short time as to translate other plays from the same popular author.

The same effect was produced in England by the success of Thompson's translation of Kotzebue's *Menschenhass und Reue*, or *Misanthropy and Repentance*, under the title of *The Stranger*. Its success, as Kotzebue says in his memoirs of himself, was overwhelming in Germany, and rendered the author the idol of the public. German plays were the rage in England until the English playwrights found it necessary to write them down, and at the same time convenient to steal from them as unconscionably as they berated them unmercifully.

Although Kotzebue is far beneath many of the German dramatists, the great popularity which his plays enjoyed at home and abroad renders him worthy of a place in any work on the drama of the period in which he lived.

Mr. John A. Dunlap has assisted us by contributing to our work the following biographical notice of this extraordinary, extravagant, successful, and unfortunate author:—

Augustus Von Kotzebue was born at Weimar on the 3d of May, 1761. His mother, being early left a widow, devoted herself to the education of her children. Kotzebue was at first placed under

successive private tutors, was then a scholar in the gymnasium of Weimar, and about the age of sixteen became a student of the university of Jena. At a very early age he became enamoured of theatrical exhibitions; his first literary efforts were usually of a dramatic character, and his darling amusement was the getting-up of private theatres, and with his companions performing plays, which were frequently of his own composition. Of these boyish efforts we are not aware that any were ever published, nor is it probable that any were worth publication.

He had, while still very young, frequent opportunities of admission to the theatre of Weimar; and when he could not gain an entrance by fair means, he would contrive to get in clandestinely. He observes, " My passion for the stage increased every day. As the theatre was entirely supported by the court, there was no paying for admission, but a limited number of tickets were regularly given out. Thus, on festival days, when a new piece or some grand pantomime-ballet was to be performed, and the concourse of company who wished to be present was unusually great, it often happened that so insignificant a person as myself could not procure a ticket. But as my curiosity was on such occasions more strongly excited than ever, I was obliged to have recourse to stratagem for its gratification. Every avenue leading to the theatre, every corner of the house, was as well

known to me as the inside of my coat-pocket; even the passages under the stage were as familiar to me as to the man that lighted the lamps. When I was hard pressed for admittance, therefore, I used to stand at the entrance allotted to the performers, and slip in dexterously behind the guards. Then, to escape pursuit, I crept instantly under the stage, whence a little door led into the orchestra: through this I got behind the great drum, which, being somewhat elevated, completely concealed my little person, and here I could see the performance very commodiously."

In his nineteenth year he closed his academical career at Jena, and soon after returned to Weimar, where he studied the pandects with extreme diligence, was examined by the principals in the law, and admitted as an advocate. "Here," he says, "while I was waiting for clients, I continued to be myself a zealous client of the Muses."

In the autumn of 1781 Kotzebue went to St. Petersburg, where he obtained, through the influence of a German officer of high rank in the employ of the Empress Catherine, some office, of the nature of which we are not informed, and where he married a Russian lady of rank. At Petersburg he wrote a tragedy, called *Demetrius, Tsar of Moscow*, which, after some difficulties of a political nature interposed by the police, was allowed to be performed at the German theatre at Petersburg, and was received with an applause which


the author considers he could only have pretended to from the forbearance generally practised towards youth.

From the capital he removed to Revel, holding a higher appointment under the Russian government. "During the first summer of my residence there," he says, "I spent the greatest part of every day in the delicious, shady walks belonging to the Castle of Catharinenthal, and read more than I wrote. In the autumn I visited for the first time the dismal and dreary environs of Kiekel, abounding with forests and morasses." "The two first dramas I ever wrote, which I consider as possessing some degree of real merit, *The Hermit of Formentera* and *Adelaide of Wulfingen*, were written at Kiekel. The former we played among ourselves; and this private performance revived my passion for the stage with even increased violence. To that passion Revel was indebted for the institution of an excellent private theatre, which produced both actors and actresses of no common talents. It was opened with a comedy of mine, called *Every Fool has his Cap*.

In the autumn of 1787 he was seized with a severe and long-protracted illness, during the height of which he wrote *Misanthropy and Repentance* (anglicized by the name of *The Stranger*,) and *The Indians in England*. In 1789 he wrote *The Virgin of the Sun*, *The Natural Son* (known in English under the title of *Lovers' Vows*,) and *Brother Maurice*. The story of the last, though worse

than extravagant, is so characteristic, perhaps, of the author and his times, that we may be excused in transcribing a sketch of it from Taylor's *Historic Survey of German Poetry*.

“ Brother Maurice was a poor nobleman, obliged to leave his aunt and sisters in narrow circumstances, and to embark for the Indies in quest of a maintenance. After having rapidly acquired the fortune of a nabob, he attempted to return through Arabia, where he was plundered of that portion of his property which was intrusted to the caravan, and was himself made slave to a Bedouin sheik. Omar, the son of the Arab chieftain, attaches himself to Maurice, learns of him a European language, obtains his liberty, and accompanies him to Europe: he has saved the life and he enjoys the friendship of Maurice. The piece opens soon after the arrival of the two friends in the seaport at which the female relatives of Maurice reside in industrious obscurity. They have just been removed to better lodgings, and are engaged in hiring an additional maid-servant. Maurice is represented as endowed with an excellent head and heart, but as having got rid of every prejudice which the freaks of modern philosophy have attacked. He proposes to each of his sisters that she should marry him; but finding them otherwise inclined, he gives the one to a painter and the other to his friend Omar. He next applies to the maid-servant, who, after various hesitations, thinks it her duty to tell him that she has already an illegitimate child, five or six



years of age, by a person who is lately dead. Maurice, likes both the child and the mother, and is determined to marry her. He is willing to let his property become a common stock, and his friends are willing that he should: they agree to lay it out in what is necessary for colonization; and, being rather unfit for Europe, to set off together for the Pelew Islands." Such is the plot of *Brother Maurice*, one of the most extravagant of Kotzebue's dramas.

In 1790, while on a visit to his mother at Weimar, together with his wife, she died. To assuage his grief he went to Paris, where he remained half a year, and from thence transferred his abode to Maynz. "Here I arranged for the press a detail of the heavy calamity I had experienced, and of my consequent wanderings, which was soon after published under the title of *My Flight to Paris*."

On his return from Paris he married another Russian lady. He afterwards resided in Germany, principally at Vienna, for three years, where he produced *Count Benjowsky*, and other pieces, which made their first appearance in the theatre in Vienna. From Vienna he returned to Russia, and on the frontier was arrested and sent to Siberia, for what cause is not explained. He has, however, published an account of his exile, under the title of "The most Remarkable Year in the life of Augustus Von Kotzebue."

Recalled from banishment, he was restored to the imperial favour, which he continued to enjoy

during the lifetime of Paul, and under his successor. He afterward went, with his wife, on a tour of pleasure to Italy, an account of which journey was published at Berlin in 1805. He then finally settled at Manheim, where he conducted a periodical miscellany, which, though more than liberal as to religion, was devoted to the politics of the holy alliance. By this he drew upon himself the execration of the friends of freedom throughout Germany, and his own sacrifice was the result.

On the 11th of March, 1819, a young man of the name of Sandt, of whose previous character nothing amiss has transpired, and who was destined for the ecclesiastical profession, called upon Kotzebue at Manheim, under some pretext, and stabbed him to the heart. Sandt did not attempt to escape : he stabbed himself, though not mortally ; was arrested, disarmed, confined, cured, tried, condemned, and beheaded.

Such was the end of Kotzebue. Some talent he undoubtedly did possess ; but it was not uniformly exerted in strengthening those moral restraints which are the safeguards of society and the foundation of human happiness ; his pen was in early life devoted to wild and pernicious views of morals and manners, and afterwards to the defence of a system which can only be supported upon the debasement of the human race. Servility was one principal ingredient of Kotzebue's moral temperament : he was ready to lick the dust before a Paul or Alexander. He received his reward

in the patronage of tyrants, and from the dagger of an enthusiast.

Of his dramatic works, not already mentioned, we will notice the following:—*Hyperborean Ass*, *Female Jacobin Club*, *Blind Love*, *Der Wildfang* (a term hardly translatable), *The Reconciliation*, and *False Shame*—comedies; *The Count of Burgundy*, and *Joanna of Montfaucon*; *Octavia*, a tragedy, founded on the history of Anthony and Cleopatra, and *Bayard*; *Hugo Grotius* and *Gustavus Vasa*—tragedies. *The Negro Slaves* is another of his productions—a piece of exaggerated, nauseous, overstrained, sentimentality. *Self-immolation* is another monstrosity. His best plays are *The Death of Rolla (Pizarro)*, *False Shame*, *Lovers' Vows*, and *The Force of Calumny*.

Kotzebue revelled in revolting subjects. *Adelaide of Wulfsingen*, already mentioned, is founded on an incestuous marriage, and the heroine, like Medea, slaughters her children. "Such plots," says Taylor, whom we have already cited, "may be borne in the closet, but good taste has ceased to patronize the exhibition of *Ædipus*, or of *The Mysterious Mother*. Prejudice may have led to excessive remorse; but not therefore would a civilized audience conspire to abolish it."

Kotzebue, according to Taylor, whom we have just cited, was "the greatest dramatic genius that Europe has produced since Shakspeare." Leaving that point to be settled by others, we will conclude this notice of Kotzebue by extracting from

the same writer a sketch of his *La Perouse*, the catastrophe of which is worthy of the author of *Brother Maurice*.

“ A play on the subject of the misfortunes of La Perouse, who is here supposed to have been shipwrecked in the South Seas. Malvina, a female savage, has saved him from the waves, and has conveyed him to an unoccupied island, where he lives with her, and has a son. In secret, he vents his sorrow for those whom he left behind in Europe: he observes a sail; he makes signals; the vessel approaches. A female and a boy are landed from a boat: they are the wife and son of La Perouse. The two women gradually discover each other's relation to La Perouse: their equal claims, their jealousy, their warm affection for him, and their children, supply interesting moments. The brother of Madame La Perouse now intervenes. He descants on the revolution of France and the insecurity of happiness in Europe; he proposes to the party to establish themselves in the South Seas, and to despatch him with the vessel for other companions. The plan is determined, and the two women consent to live in *sisterly union* with La Perouse.”


Kotzebue's great talent was facility of invention; his incidents are admirable; his delineation of character is often fine; but many of his characters partake of the age in which he lived, and of his own false philosophy and false estimate of the foundation on which society ought to rest.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Boston Theatre, autumn of 1798—Names of Performers there engaged—Mrs. S. Powell—Mr. Villiers—New-York Theatre—Sterne's *Maria, or the Vintage*—The Natural Daughter—Great Success of *The Stranger*—*Lovers' Vows*—Count Benyowski—Schiller's *Don Carlos*—Biography of Schiller.

IN the mean time, Boston being free from pestilence, Mr. Hodgkinson had the good fortune to find profitable employment for himself, his family, and the company he had engaged. It appears that he gave dissatisfaction as a manager, by raising the price of admission to the pit from 50 to 75 cents. As an apology, he stated that, in 1797, he had lost 5000 dollars by his theatrical business in Boston. On the 13th of November he advertises the pit admission at 50 cents again.

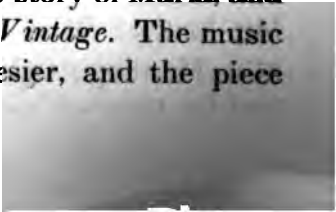

The company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson; Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock; Mr. and Mrs. S. Powell; Mrs. Brett; Miss Brett; Mr. and Mrs. Harper; Mr. Williamson (the singer); Mr. Chalmers; Mr. Turnbull; Mr. Simpson (Irish Simpson); Mr. Munto; Mr. Helmbold; Mr. Kedy; Mr. Price; Mr. Homer; Mr. Villiers; Mr. Kenny; Mr. Lathy; Miss Solomon; Miss S. Solomon; Miss Harding; and Mrs. King.



Of the most important personages in this list we have already spoken, except Mrs. S. Powell. This lady's early history is unknown to us. She came to this country as Miss Harrison in the first company that played in the Federal Street theatre, Boston. She was an elegant woman, and a good actress. She was exemplary in her social duties, and, if now living, enjoys competency and all the fruits of prudence and virtue. She filled respectably the highest lines of tragedy and comedy, and will long live in the memories of the public of Boston, as well as in the affections of those who knew her private worth.

Mr. Villiers was the low comedian of the company, and an actor of force and merit. He of course could only expect to play such characters as the manager thought unworthy of his attention; as must have been the case in respect to every portion of the drama where Hodgkinson was the director, and in the greater part of every branch he had no competitor in this country at that time. Moreton was dead. Cooper, far his superior in tragedy, was yet negligent, and his great excellence confined to a few characters. Fennell's walk was very confined, and his pursuits irregular.

On the 14th of January, 1799, the manager of the New-York theatre brought out an opera written by himself, founded on the story of *Maria*, and called *Sterne's Maria, or The Vintage*. The music was composed by Victor Pellesier, and the piece



pleased and was pleasing, but not sufficiently attractive or popular to keep the stage after the original performers in it were removed by those fluctuations common in theatrical establishments. *Sterne's Maria* was thus cast: Sir Harry Metland, Mr. Hallam, junr.; Yorick, Mr. Cooper; Pierre, (an old man, father of Maria), Mr. Hogg; Henry (Maria's lover), Mr. Tyler; La Fleur, Mr. Jefferson; Landlords, Peasants, &c.—Maria, Miss E. Westray; Nannette, Mrs. Oldmixon; Lilla, Mrs. Seymour. It is not necessary to observe, to those acquainted with any part of American theatrical history, that the music of the piece was confined to Messrs. Tyler and Jefferson among the males. The females were all singers; Mrs. Oldmixon the superior. After the opening chorus in the vineyard at sunset, and preparations for the peasants' dance, we will give a few lines to characterize the dialogue.

—— Why should I wish a change?

Pierre. But the change will come unwished, and to be happy we must be prepared for it. Yes, pretty Nannette, when the time of sport is past, and the roses have fled from your cheeks—your companions all married or dead—the young men will shun you, the young women jeer you.

Nannette. Then shall innocence sing the song of content to the bosom of humble Nannette!


Sterne's words were kept for Yorick, with little variation, and the story of Maria told in his language. La Fleur is the lover of Nannette, and gives this account of taking leave of his drum and his military life.

I loved my companions, did my duty, and was always as tight as my own drum-head when braced, and as trim and neat as the sticks. But one of my comrades was sentenced to the halberts, and I was ordered to inflict the sentence of the court on him. I could have cut my own throat as soon. "No, no," said I, "I can't; I will beat on dried sheep's-skin as long as you please, but not on the quivering flesh of my fellow-creature. I was sentenced to receive double the number of lashes for my refusal—but the soldiers winked at my escape.—I left glory and my drum behind me—let the courtmartial determine which is the most noisy and empty of the two."

The principal performers of the New York company this season were Messrs. Cooper, Hallam, Jefferson, Tyler, Barrett, Bates, Martin, and Hogg; Mesdames Barrett, Oldmixon, Hogg, Seymour, Hallam, Misses Westray and E. Westray.

During the month of January, Mr. Cooper's *Macbeth* attracted attention. [Barrett refused to play *Macduff*.] *The Stranger* was the support of the theatre, and in February, Mr. Henderson, from the proprietors, proposed that Mr. Dunlap should purchase the theatre for 85,000 dollars, the amount of debt due by the proprietors, after exhausting the money subscribed and paid, viz: 40,000; the property to be mortgaged, with a right in the purchaser to redeem, and, in case of destruction by fire, the land and ruins to revert to the original proprietors, and the purchaser to be exonerated.

On the 8th of February, 1799, the manager produced a comedy called *The Natural Daughter*, which was in itself complicated and ineffective, and most wretchedly played, in a cold winter's



storm, to empty benches, and never repeated. But the apparently indefatigable author and manager had already finished another comedy, *The Italian Father*, and translated Kotzebue's *Natural Son* (under the name given it in England of *Lovers' Vows*), and *Count Benyowski*. The last piece was at this time in rehearsal, the scenery having been got ready under the direction of Ciceri, and the music from the pen of Pellesier. A piece called *The Temple of Independence* was likewise written and produced on Washington's birth-day, the 22d of February, 1799, with *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Romp*. The receipts of the night in a storm 610 dollars, and the new occasional piece, which principally depended on Mrs. Barrett, was received with enthusiasm. *The Stranger* was played for the 10th time on the 8th of March, to 624 dollars.

On the 11th of March, the manager's version of *Lovers' Vows* was played with full success, the receipts 622 dollars. In this play Mr. Cooper again gave great delight, in the character of the Natural Son, and Mr. Tyler supported the Baron with great success ; but the eminent popularity of the piece was as much to be attributed to the happy combination of youth, beauty, judgment, and *naiveté* of manner, which Miss E. Westray displayed in the daughter of the Baron, and sister of Frederick. Neither *The Stranger*, nor *Lovers' Vows*, as written for the American theatre, is published ; and the versions from London have

been preferred by London players. But we will remark here, that when Mrs. Merry read the American *Stranger*, she declined playing Mrs. Haller in New-York, as studied from the London copy.

In a letter about this time to Mr. Cooper, it appears that an engagement was proposed by him for another year, he being secured a salary of 30 dollars for 42 weeks. All the characters he named (the first and best), were given to him, but a proposal that he should withhold his services from new pieces if the principal part did not please him was objected to.

On the first of April, the play of *Count Benyowski* was brought out with great expense and care. Receipts first night 800 dollars. The audience were much gratified, and expectation, though on tip-toe, fully satisfied. The costumes of Russia and Siberia were strictly conformed to, and the snow and ice scenes of Kamschatka would have been invaluable in the dog-days. The play was thus cast : The Governor of Bolcheretsk, Mr. Hallam ; Hettman of the Cossacks, Mr. Bates ; Benyowski, Mr. Cooper ; Crustiew, Mr. Tyler ; Stepenoff, Mr. Barrett ; Kudrin, Mr. Jefferson ; Gurcinin, Mr. Martin ; Exiles, Conspirators, &c.—Athanasia, Mrs. Barrett ; Feodora, Mrs. Oldmixon.

The play was well performed for a first representation. It is necessary to say that the literal

translations of Count Benyowski can give no idea of the drama as prepared for the New-York stage. Mr. Barrett's Stepenoff was good, and Mrs. Barrett, though not youthful enough for the heroine, played it with truth and force. Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Oldmixon supported the comedy of the piece, and Bates, as usual, said any thing but what was put down for him.

The next play of note, as a novelty, was Schiller's *Don Carlos*, performed on the 6th of May, 1799. Those who have read this voluminous poem in the original, or in translation, will know that only a meagre curtailment of it could be performed within the ordinary time allowed to an English play. The manager curtailed it, and it was more curtailed in the performance. The receipts were 676 dollars. It was not repeated. It was unmercifully shorn of its beams.

As this is the first time that Schiller, the greatest dramatist of his age, has become a legitimate subject of notice, as connected with the history of the American theatre, we seize the opportunity of closing this chapter with a biographical sketch by the same writer who furnished us with that of Augustus Von Kotzebue, John A. Dunlap, Esq.

Frederick Schiller was born at Marbach, a small town of Wirtemberg, on the 10th of November, 1759. His father had been a surgeon in the Bavarian army, and was afterwards taken into the service of the Duke of Wirtemberg. Frederick's original destination was the church, and

his early studies were adapted to that object ; but circumstances rendered a change advisable ; law was adopted, and with this view he was placed in the Ducal Seminary at Stutgard, where he continued six years, with increasing dislike for the pursuit, until he was allowed to abandon it for the study of medicine, in the same seminary. Having completed his medical studies, he, in 1780, obtained the post of surgeon in the Wirtemberg army, but a year or two afterwards he relinquished his profession, never to resume it.

Schiller never pursued professional studies with alacrity. Poetry and dramatic literature had peculiar charms for him ; while a student he produced several poetical effusions, and a tragedy, *Cosmo de Medicis*, some fragments of which he retained and inserted in his *Robbers*. It is by *The Robbers* that Schiller is best known in this country. He commenced it in his nineteenth year, and, after his emancipation from school, printed it at his own expense, not being able to find a bookseller who would undertake it. Notwithstanding its great faults, of which Schiller himself, in maturer life, became perfectly sensible, its popularity was immense ; it was soon translated into most of the European languages, and was performed, for the first time, at Manheim, in 1781. A story has been extensively circulated, that a young German nobleman, allured by the character of Moor, the hero of the tragedy, had abandoned the fairest gifts and prospects, betaken himself to the forests,

and begun a course of active operations, which, like Moor's, was terminated by a shameful death. "The German nobleman of the fairest gifts and prospects," observes the anonymous English biographer of Schiller (London, 1825) from whom this notice of his life is principally derived, "turns out on investigation to have been a German black-guard, whom debauchery and riotous extravagance had reduced to want; who took to the highway, when he could take to nothing else—not allured by an ebullient enthusiasm, or any heroic and misdirected appetite for sublime actions, but driven by the more palpable stimulus of importunate duns, an empty purse, and five craving senses. Perhaps, in his later days, this philosopher may have referred to Schiller's tragedy for the source from which he drew his theory of life; but if so, we believe he was mistaken. For characters like him, the great attraction was the charms of revelry, and the great restraint, the gallows,—before the period of Karl von Moor, just as they have been since, and will be to the end of time."

But whatever effect *The Robbers* may have had on the morals of the youth of Germany, its publication materially influenced the future destinies of Schiller, by drawing down upon him the displeasure of his master, the Duke of Wirtemberg, which, exhibited at first in petty vexations, at length reached so great a height, that Schiller, apprehensive of worse consequences, was obliged to elope clandestinely from Stutgard. Concealing

himself in Franconia, he produced within a year his tragedies of *Conspiracy of Fiesco*, and *Cabal and Love*, which were published together in 1783, and the former was soon after brought upon the Manheim theatre with universal applause. In the same year he removed to that city, where, under a new sovereign, the Elector Palatine, he was secure from the malice of his former prince, and, as poet to the theatre, held a post of respectability and moderate income.

From Manheim, Schiller went to Leipsig, and from Leipsig to Dresden, but with what definite object we do not understand. It was at Dresden he completed his *Don Carlos* (published in 1786), which he had commenced at Manheim. His former tragedies were written in prose; this was composed in blank verse, as were all its successors. During his residence at Dresden, he applied himself to the study of history, and produced the first volume of the *History of the Revolt of the United Netherlands*, published in 1788. The work, though never completed, had its effect in procuring for Schiller the appointment of professor of history in the University of Jena, in the Duchy of Weimar, whither he removed in 1789, where he married, and where, and in Weimar the capital, he passed the residue of his days, and, notwithstanding a pulmonary attack, which had at first almost terminated his existence, and which clung to him until he was finally brought to the grave, he still continued his studies with unintermitting exer-

tion, supported principally by a pension from the Duke of Weimar, which was from time to time increased, enjoying the friendship and munificence of that liberal prince, under whom it was now his good fortune to be placed, and with Wieland and Göthe, his friends and associates, forming one of the great literary triumvirate which has made Weimar the Athens of Germany.

A long interval had intervened, until Schiller, in 1799, brought forward his *Wallenstein*, which had for seven years been before him in irregular and often suspended progress. This is not one single drama, but a series of three plays, under different titles, all of which—not like the historical plays of Shakspeare, having no other connexion than mere chronological sequence—tend to the grand catastrophe, the tragical and mysterious death of the hero.

In 1800 appeared his *Mary Stuart* ; the next year *The Maid of Orleans* ; and in 1803 *The Bride of Messina*, which being little known out of its native language, we will introduce, from Taylor's *Historic Sketch of German Poetry*, an account of its fable, first premising that choruses, though not precisely in the style of the Greek drama, form a part of its *dramatis personæ*.

“ A duke of Messina is recently dead, who leaves two sons, both of age, but separated from each other by factious rivalry. Isabella, their widowed mother, endeavours to produce a reconciliation, and succeeds in bringing them together.

They have both fallen in love with Beatrice, a beautiful woman of unknown parentage, resident in a convent near Mount Etna. In her presence they unexpectedly meet, and Don Cæsar, the younger brother, in a fit of jealousy kills Don Manuel, the elder brother, who was preferred by Beatrice. Meanwhile it appears that Isabella had once a younger daughter, of whom it was prophesied that she should occasion the extinction of the whole house, and whom the father had therefore ordered to be drowned ; but the mother had secretly preserved the girl, and caused her to be reared in a convent of nuns on Mount Etna. This is the Beatrice for whom both the brothers have formed a passion. The successive discoveries of the relationships between the parties give occasion to terrible situations ; at length Don Cæsar, to atone for the murder of his brother, and to terminate a remediless disappointment of love, closes the play with a deliberate suicide." This tragedy was not successful, although it is highly praised as a specimen of poetry.

In 1804 he produced *William Tell*. This was his last effort ; and *this* and *Wallenstein* are regarded not only as his greatest efforts, but as among the greatest which have appeared for ages. The same year brought back a return of disease, which had never wholly left him since its first access, and which was doubtless increased by his habits of nocturnal study, and keeping up his strength and spirits by artificial stimulus. In

May, 1805, it reached its crisis, and on the 9th of that month he expired, aged forty-five years and some months, leaving a widow, two sons, and two daughters.

Thus removed, while still in the vigour of manhood, by a hopeless disease, from a circle who idolized him, and from a world he had laboured to serve, his sufferings were alleviated by the best of children, and by a wife who merited the attachment he ever evinced for her. Some hours before his death he was asked how he found himself. "More and more easy every moment," he replied. "Had he not reason," says Madame de Stael, from whom we translate the passage, "had he not reason to confide in that God whose servant he had faithfully been?" "He had a motive of action through life," says the same eloquent writer, "even above the love of glory—*the love of truth*. He was the best of friends, of fathers, and of husbands—respect for women, enthusiasm for the fine arts, and adoration of the Divinity, animated the genius of Schiller."

He was interred in the ducal chapel of Weimar, beside the place which the then reigning duke intended for himself, designing to be supported in the grave, on one side by Schiller, and on the other by the other literary luminary of his court, Schiller's warm and constant friend, the celebrated Göthe. Göthe, on the 22d of March, 1832, departed to take the place assigned to him, at the age of eighty-two years.

.

Schiller, besides his tragedies, the unfinished romance of *The Ghost Seer*, and his *History of the Thirty Years' War*, conducted or contributed for some years to several periodical journals, principally devoted to poetry, and dramatic literature, and criticisms on the stage—wrote a number of ballads and lyrical poems, many of which are much admired—several essays, philosophical and miscellaneous—and translated, among other works, Shakspeare's *Macbeth*, and the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides.

Schiller's plays are well known to the literary world, but, except *The Robbers*, they are not familiar to the frequenters of the English or American theatres; and *The Robbers* is so mutilated and mangled as to give no adequate idea of the great German poet.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1799—The Italian Father—Philadelphia Company—New Agreement for the New-York Theatre—Wignell and Reinagle's failure in Philadelphia—Proposals to Mrs. Merry—Her Letter in answer—Mr. Hodgkinson offers himself and family for the New-York Theatre, and is engaged—Death of Stephen Wools—Fennell opens a theatre in New-York and shuts it again—Yellow Fever of 1799—Letter from Kotzebue—New-York Theatre opens 18th of November—False Shame—Force of Calumny—Wild-goose Chase—Robbers—Death of Washington—Mr. Cooper leaves New-York—Virgin of the Sun—Pizarro.

ON the 15th of April, 1799, the comedy of *The Italian Father* was played at the New-York theatre, and, as it was supposed to be one of Kotzebue's, though nothing was said to mislead the public or the performers, it was received with great applause, and extolled by many as the best of the great German dramatist's productions. Nothing can be more unlike the style of the German plays than the style of this play. The manager-author had adopted the German mode of concluding the last act, and this tended to confirm the preconceived opinion that it was a continuation of his labours in the German mine. The play was announced without mentioning any author or any birthplace; otherwise it is probable, such was the prejudice of the *then* public, that few would have

attended the first representation of a piece imperfectly and negligently committed to memory by actors prejudiced against it, and that those few would have gone away dissatisfied or coldly approving. As it was, the actors studied assiduously, played spiritedly, and the play was received with enthusiasm. Decker furnished many of the finest passages of this drama.

This comedy was published in 1810, with a note by the author prefixed, acknowledging that he had "enriched his work" from the obsolete sources afforded by the old English dramatists, but "without forfeiting his claim to originality in the composition." As this play is considered by the author as the best of the many he has written, we may be allowed to give the cast as first performed, and a few extracts. It was thus cast:—Michael Brazzo (the father), Mr. Tyler, who played it correctly, but was altogether inadequate to the deep, concentrated, and varied feelings of the character; Beraldo, Mr. Cooper, who ought, as he afterwards acknowledged, to have played Brazzo; Hippolito, Martin; Lodovico, Bates; Fool, finely played by Mr. Jefferson; Beatrice, Miss E. Westray; Astrabel (the discarded daughter of Brazzo, and married to Beraldo), well performed by Mrs. Barrett; Leonora, written for, and perfectly played by, Mrs. Oldmixon.

As a specimen of the quaint style which the author adopted in this comedy, to conform to the old English plays, we give a few lines from the

opening scene, in which Lodovico tells some one on the stage, by way of telling the audience, that Hippolito was that day married to Beatrice, the Duke of Milan's daughter ; and that Beraldo, who had seduced Astrabel, the daughter of Brazzo, and had been compelled to marry her, was a disgraced and desperate man, and then in prison. Lodovico is the old-time fop or coxcomb.

Hippolito was, before his marriage with my Lady Beatrice, as simple a gentleman as I who now confront you, and much the same for merit, except not so abundant in wit ; and for personal beauty, I think I ever had the advantage. Ah, there was music in the trios which Hippolito, Beraldo, and Lodovico performed ! But so it turns with the wheel of dame Fortune—up goes Hippolito for a prince—down goes Beraldo for a beggar—while I stick to the hub of the wheel, and, though constantly turning round, remain in the middle still.

A few lines of the next scene.

—Lodovico is a wit.

Leonora. Not a dry one—for he is ever drenched in wine after dinner.

Beatrice. Yet if not dry, why is he ever drinking ?

Leonora. He has a thirsty wit, I grant you, lady. And here comes your father's fool. Let us bless Heaven, lady, that we had not the wit and the fool both on our hands at one time. [*Hilario, the fool, enters.*]

Beatrice. How now, Hilario ?

Fool. Well, now, madonna—but not well then—yet, pretty well—now and then.

Leonora. Still say I, Heaven be praised, wit fled as folly approached.

Astrabel seeks Hippolito, once her husband's companion, now the prince's heir, and petitions for

the release of Beraldo, her husband, from prison. It is promised, and Hippolito questions her of her father, Brazzo. She says :

Michael Brazzo remembers not he had a daughter.

What does he for you ?

All he should. When children start from duty, parents may swerve from love. He nothing does, for nothing I deserve. You may restore my husband from the jaws of death — but to restore me to a father's love—Impossible ! Impossible !

It shall be put to trial.

Brazzo, being informed of the extreme poverty of his daughter, exclaims, when alone, "Alas, my girl ! Art thou so poor ? Poverty dwells next door to despair — there is but a thin and broken wall between them."

One more extract. Hippolito, to further the reconciliation of Brazzo to his daughter, visits the house of Beraldo.

Hippolito. I must chide thee, Beraldo, for thy long estrangement from me. How has it happened that, being neighbours here in Milan, we have been thus distant ?

Beraldo. O, my lord, though the hovel of the beggar should touch the palace of the prince, still is the distance between them measureless.

Hippolito. But thou didst know me, Beraldo.

Beraldo. As Hippolito I knew you, not as the heir of Milan.

Hippolito. And didst thou think that fortune had so changed me that I was not still Hippolito ?

Beraldo. Pardon me, my lord, I have been a fool—I am still a fool. When fortune smiled upon me, I was praised for a certain bluntness which, in a laced coat, was called honesty ; of late days it hath gone by the different names of sullenness and impertinence. I will try what you will call it. I felt that if I had been Beraldo in the palace, I should not have waited until Hippolito had crept from the hovel to find me.

There are some wholesome lessons against becoming a doctor.

O, never let the smooth-tongued, smiling, sycophantic dealer wheedle you into purchasing wares for which you cannot immediately pay. Every one who contracts a debt promises to pay, and if the time of payment arrives and he is unable, he may be charged with breach of promise. The same wheedling trader, no longer with fascinating smiles, will tell you that you have been living upon his property—you cannot deny it—he will then insolently add, that when you contracted the debt you did not mean to pay it—and, though conscious of honest purpose, you may look in his coward eye till it quails and seeks the earth, the same loquacious shopboy tongue will continue its false assertions, which you will not repel—for, though indignant at the foul charges, you know that you are—a debtor to the wretch who insults you.

There is an upper and under plot ; one to reconcile the father to his disobedient, but long-suffering, virtuous, and repentant daughter, and one to punish the coxcomb Lodovico, to unite the fool and the lady's attendant, and to cure the young bride of jealousy produced by her husband's agency in the first plot. Perhaps too much of this. We will resume our history.

The Philadelphia theatre, in the season of 1799-1800, was tenanted by the following very strong company :—Messrs. Warren, Wood, Cooper, Bernard, Marshall, Cain, Blisset, Darley, sen., L'Es-trange, Warrell, Francis, Wignell, Doctor, Morris, Robbins, Cromwell, Warrell, jun., Mitchell, Hopkins, and Master Harris ; Messrs. Holland, Milbourne, and Robins, artists in the scene department ; Mesdames Merry, Marshall, Morris, Warrell, Francis, Doctor, Gillingham, Salmon, Ber-

nard ; Misses L'Estrange, Arnold, Solomon, and Broadhurst.

As the theatrical season drew to a close in New-York, it had become necessary that the manager should have a renewed lease of the house, or become, as was proposed, the purchaser. A company was to be formed, and arrangements made for the the next campaign. His reputation as a director and author had not declined. He had, certainly, not been idle this season. Besides the general direction of the great machine, he had superintended the stage, acted as treasurer, and produced six plays, original and translated, and some occasional interludes.

On the 26th of March he addressed a note to the proprietors, from which the following is an extract:—"My expectations of profit from the business have proved fallacious ; I have laboured to the extent of my strength through this winter, and have gained nothing. My hopes are now reduced to the profit which may arise from the month of April, which I shall be happy to realize at the amount of the debt incurred before the opening." The purchase is mentioned, and he declines taking the house on the present terms. Mr. Henderson informed him that he was confident the purchase could be effected, but wished proposals for leasing it another year, such proposals to be void if the purchase was made. The result was, taking the theatre at 4000 dollars.

Mr. Robert Merry died in December, 1798, and Mrs. Merry's engagement with Mr. Wignell having closed, a letter, of which the following is part, was addressed to her. "Rumour says that your intention is to return to your native land this spring: to arrest the execution of that purpose, and prevail upon you to exert your talents upon the stage of the theatre under my direction at New-York, is the intent of this letter. Is there any emolument that an American theatre can yield to a performer, sufficient to induce you to reside a year longer in the country?" It is then stated that for 34 or 40 weeks, 60 dollars salary and 600 dollars profit on a benefit shall be ensured. The following answer was received:—

Philadelphia, April 29th, 1799.

SIR—In answer to your polite letter, I have to inform you that it is not my intention at present to return to Europe. I am every day in expectation of receiving letters from my connexions in England, and before I know what their wishes are, it will be improper for me to enter into any new engagement.

Mr. Wignell has invariably behaved to me like a man of honour and a sincere friend; my article with him has in every point been fulfilled to this moment. What the situation of this theatre may be next winter is past conjecture; but I think it *more than probable* that the present holders will still retain the management.

In the course of the month I think I shall know to a certainty how to proceed in my arrangements for the next season, and will take the earliest opportunity of informing you if any change in this theatre should induce me to leave Philadelphia.

Permit me to say, there is no situation on the continent I should accept with greater pleasure than the one offered me in your establishment.

I remain, &c. &c.

ANN MERRY.

As early as the 16th of April, an agent of Mr. Hodgkinson's called on the manager of the New-York theatre, and read to him part of a letter, in which Mr. Hodgkinson says he is coming to New-York, and that he is willing to engage as a performer. About the same time it was known that he was overwhelmed with debt, from the management at Boston, and at variance with the proprietors of the Federal Street Theatre.

On the 27th of April, a letter was received from Mr. Hodgkinson, offering himself and family for New-York. He says, "My pecuniary embarrassments will not allow me to leave the company until June." He offers himself as a partner to the manager, "or if not, what *allowance of salary and list of characters* would you undertake to give myself and Mrs. Hodgkinson in a *private capacity*? Mrs. and Miss Brett, and Miss Harding, with Mrs. King, being *after-considerations*." The words marked by italics are underscored, as was the custom of their writer. The letter concludes with what is intended as a threat of "a *compelled statement*" to the public of New-York of the "circumstances" he "labours under."

In the answer to this are these lines: "It appears to contain" (his letter) "an appeal, an offer, and a threat. Of the latter I shall take no notice. It seems to be a matter in dispute which is the debtor of the other." "Now as two parties holding diametrically opposite opinions seldom succeed in convincing each other, it is generally necessary

to call in the aid of a third. In our case let that third by mutual agreement be a jury of our fellow-citizens. If you can make it conformable to your views of interest to come hither and exert your talents under my direction, for a certain predetermined emolument, let us agree to abide by such a decision." On the subject of salary (the idea of renewed partnership was passed over), the offer was 50 dollars a week for himself, and 30 for Mrs. Hodgkinson, they finding their own wardrobes, servants, and dresses. Benefit charges were to be 380 dollars. The complicated business of characters to be performed or not to be performed made an important part of this negotiation, but could not be rendered interesting to a reader. It was the wish of the actor to play every thing : it was the wish of the manager to reserve some power of directing his business in his own hands, and that two such excellent performers as Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson should stand in their proper places before the public. As to the family of "after-considerations," the manager plainly said that he did not wish to have any thing to do with them ; but if the principals were only to be had by taking the accessories, it must be determined what the cost would be.

Before sending his answer, the manager called on Mr. Henderson, as agent for the proprietors of the theatre, and he read a letter he had just received from Hodgkinson, offering himself "a candidate" for the management of the New-York theatre. It

being Mr. Henderson's wish that Hodgkinson should be engaged, the letter in answer to the above proposals was sent.

Mr. Hodgkinson's reply is dated Boston, May 2d, 1799. In speaking of the contract formerly entered into with the proprietors of the Haymarket theatre, Boston, he says, "It is the opinion of the first lawyer in Massachusetts, 'that as the law prohibiting every species of theatrical performance has never been repealed, no contract can be a legal one which the law does not sanction.' " He offers to engage for himself and wife for 100 dollars per week, and adds, "Mr. Hodgkinson *shall not* have the *power* of objecting to any character appointed by the manager, provided such character be in tragedy the first character, *also in genteel comedy*; and if Mr. Hodgkinson *should* object, he shall pay for every such objection a forfeit of five pounds sterling." The stipulation for Mrs. Hodgkinson is much the same, with the same forfeit or penalty. The terms of engagement for Mrs. and Miss Brett, Mrs. King, and Miss Harding, are left to the manager's "generosity." A list of one hundred and forty-six characters was inclosed, which Mr. H. wished to play, and nearly as many for his wife. He asks the list to be returned with a mark on such characters as the manager does not wish him to play, and requests the loan of the plays of *Benyowski* and *The Italian Father*. The manuscripts were sent to him. After some further stipulations for characters, and after Mr. Cooper

had given up some he held by agreement, the business was concluded, and the family engaged.

On the 6th of May, a notice was attached to the bill of the play, saying, "Last night of the season, for the benefit of the lessee of the theatre: after which, the individual in whose name the bill of the night will be made out takes every risk and is alone responsible to the public for the pieces exhibited." This was ill-judged, to say no more of it.

This regulation made the actor master of the house for his benefit. We will mention an incident resulting from it. There was a standing law which prohibited performers during the time of exhibition from encumbering the wings, and impeding the carpenters. John D. Miller, before mentioned, not being yet an alderman, was in the habit of breaking the law by gliding from his dressing-room and placing himself in the carpenter's gallery. Mr. George Concklin, long the head carpenter, found it necessary to exert his legal authority, and expel the embryo alderman from the premises. Miller submitted. But, when he on his benefit night became master of the house and lord of the ascendant, he thought that he had an opportunity for retaliation. Concklin had a key which admitted him from the carpenter's gallery into the upper boxes; by this means he could in a moment pass from the scene of labour to that of enjoyment, and could see the effect produced by the machinery he superintended. Miller had observed this, and

on his night, seeing Concklin pass into the boxes, without having locked the door after him, the alderman followed and ordered him triumphantly, by virtue of the regulation which made the house his, to retire from his seat of ease and light to the region of labour and darkness. Concklin obeyed the law, and passed the door to his own domain; but as the actor, in all the paint and embroidery of his assumed character for the stage, was following, the carpenter suddenly closed the door in his face, and the key, being inside, locked him in that portion of the house he had claimed as his own. This passed in the upper region, and the alderman had no resource but to descend through his congregated friends, as they were crowding to the boxes, then by the front door to the street, and through the admiring boys and coachmen, until he could gain an asylum behind the scenes again, by means of the dark and dirty passage of Theatre Alley.

“It’s a mad world, my masters,” and a mutable. We have seen John D. Miller, the baker’s boy, sitting on the judge’s bench, dispensing life or death, liberty or imprisonment, labour and chains. We see and hope long to see George Concklin, who slapped the door in his face, the owner of squares, and the chairman of ward committees. It has passed or is passing—let us pass on to another subject, still marking the mutation in the shifting scenes of the world and its epitome the stage.

Mr. Stephen Wools, so long in presence of the public as a singer and performer, before and after

the war of our revolution, died on the 14th of June, 1799, aged 70, and was buried in the cemetery of the Roman chapel, in Barclay Street. A benefit night was given for the widow and daughter of Mr. Wools, on the 15th. The amount of the benefit evinced the esteem entertained for the man.

Fennell, notwithstanding his salt-making, and catching gulls "all along shore," from Chesapeake Bay to Sandy Hook, had found means to get possession of the last built circus in Greenwich Street, on the west side, nearly opposite of that in which Wignell's company played in 1797, and which was now removed. Although he had been incarcerated again and again in almost every place at which he had resided, Fennell now prepared to open this circus, and engaged performers for a summer theatre in New-York. But, after commencing about the 20th of June, with such actors as were not re-engaged for the Park house, he finally gave up the plan. He had advertised *The Roman Father*, with Barrett's Horatius, his own Publius, and Mrs. Barrett's Horatia; nobody came to see them, and he shut up the house. He then began to collect subscribers for a salt manufactory, to be put in operation in the circus, the back part of which rested on the water, and he commenced altering the building accordingly, buying up lumber from any North-river dealer in the article who could be persuaded to receive promises in payment. He used at this time to

dress his lofty and handsome person in a plain black suit, with silk stockings, and gilt shoe-buckles, and his cocked hat was ornamented with a gold button and loop. The result was a residence in the debtors' prison of New-York.

The manager of the Park house having produced his seventh new play for this season, an alteration from *The Deserter* of the French, called *The School for Soldiers*, and it having been played on the fourth of July, 1799, with his piece called *The Temple of Independence*, he closed the house for the summer.

In August, 1799, the yellow fever again appeared in New-York. The manager of the theatre resided at Perth Amboy, his native place, and was employed in translating Kotzebue's comedy of *False Shame*, and turning the farce of *Der Wildfang* into an opera, which he called *The Wildgoose Chase*; a title which some wiseacres thought was intended as a translation of the German appellation.

The Boston theatre was opened under the direction of Mr. Barrett, who by agreement was to get up *Count Benyowski*, *The Italian Father*, and the other plays written or translated by W. Dunlap, and share the profits arising from them.

Mr. Hodgkinson had a company at Hartford. This was the last season of playing there, the legislature passing a law of prohibition soon afterwards.

A letter was received on the 11th of October,

directed "*Herrn Wm. Dunlap, Director des Theaters in New-York*, from August Von Kotzebue, in which he expresses his pleasure that the favourable reception of his muse in America should be owing to his correspondent. "I will, with great satisfaction, forward my new pieces to you. Those already printed are to be had of the bookseller, Kummer, in Leipzig. The new, unpublished pieces are six, namely, *The Epigram*, in four acts; *The Reward of Truth*, in five acts; *Johanna of Montfaucon*, five acts; *The Writing Desk*, in four acts; *The Two Klingsbergs*, in four acts; *The Wise Woman in the Wood*, in five acts. These will not be printed in 18 months or two years. I am accustomed for such a period to sell my manuscripts to the best theatres in Germany, and also to the London theatre of Covent Garden. The price to be regulated by the power of the theatre; leaving to the justice and delicacy of the director to remunerate me according to his power and the profit derived from the pieces. Covent Garden has given for each piece one hundred pounds sterling. According to the foregoing, you may regulate the sum you can give, and if you wish the six pieces, to save time, as the distance between us is great, whatever sum you can and are willing to give, may be transmitted to Mr. Casper Voght, at Ham-
burgh, who will send you the manuscripts. You will have the same right as that given to Covent Garden, to sell again to any stage in America, guaranteeing to me that they shall not be printed.

With thanks, &c. Your friend and servant, August Von Kotzebue."

The New-York plays were successful in Boston, and yielded some profit to their author, who commenced his business as manager for this winter, on the 18th of November, 1799; thus again losing the best portion of the theatrical season — the autumn.

The opening pieces were *The Heir at Law* and *Old Maid*. The receipts 636 dollars. On the second evening, *The Carmelite* and *Poor Soldier* were played, and introduced Mr. Fox as Montgomery and Bagatelle. This young man was a singer, and possessed merit as an actor. He was the only novelty of the company, which stood thus, and thus salaried—Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, 100 dollars; Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, 50; Mr. Cooper, 32; Mr. Jefferson, 25; Mr. Martin, 25; Mr. Tyler, 25; Mr. Fox, 18; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Hogg, 32; Lee, 12; Stockwell, 4; Mrs. Melmoth, 25; Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, 25; Miss E. Westray, 18; Mrs. Brett, 14; Miss Brett, 14; Miss Harding, 10; Mrs. King, 6; Mr. Hallam. jun., 18; Mr. Perkins, 12; Mrs. Perkins, 20.

A letter was received from Mr. Whitlock, saying, "that from Mr. Barrett's conduct, it was unlikely that himself and wife should remain in Boston." He adds, "when we part it shall be with honour to myself. It is now three years since I have been under the direction of a manager deserv- ing the name of gentleman. If you and I, sir,

can meet on terms of reciprocal advantage, I shall be happy." The manager was at this time under the necessity of declining this offer. Mr. Powell now offered the services of himself and wife, and Barrett offered his wife. None could be accepted, as the company was full.

The comedy of *False Shame*, as translated and adapted to the American theatre by the translator of the previously acted German plays, was performed with the utmost success on the 11th of December, 1799. This play, without scenery or decoration, by plain dialogue and natural character, supported the theatre this, the second, season of the author's direction. As in the case of *The Stranger*, it ran through the whole winter. *The Force of Calumny*, *Fraternal Discord* (from the same pen), and other pieces, did their part; but *False Shame* was the pillar on which all rested. The cast of this play stood thus—The Baron, Mr. Tyler; Captain Erlach, Mr. Hodgkinson; Wieland, Mr. Cooper; John, Mr. Jefferson; Frelon, Mr. Fox; Maillac, Mr. Martin; Baroness, Mrs. Hodgkinson; Adelaide, Mrs. Hallam; Emmy, Miss E. Westray; Madame Moreau, Mrs. Melmoth. Never was part better suited to Mr. Hodgkinson than that of Erlach, and never was part better played. Emmy was for Miss E. Westray a second Amelia, as portrayed in *Lovers' Vows*. Her youth and beauty contrasted finely with Hodgkinson's figure and manner, which were so well suited to the veteran German officer, who had borne her

when an infant from the flames of Charleston, and the exquisitely natural playing of both made an impression never to be forgotten, and rendered the comedy useless to the theatre of New-York when they ceased to perform the parts. All the piece was well played ; and never were the critics of the green-room more disappointed than the performers in this piece were, when they found that audience after audience were delighted by this unadorned comedy.

On the 20th of December, 1799, it was known in New-York that Washington died on the 14th. The theatre was shut until the 30th, when it was opened with mourning emblems and a covering of black. Mr. Cooper spoke a monody, written by the director's friend, C. B. Brown : a new play was performed for the first time—a piece translated from the French by the manager, and called *The Robbery*. It was most imperfectly played : it was repeated but once. This mourning appearance and black dress was kept on the house until after the 22d of February, which, as Washington's birthday, was consecrated to the memory of his loss, and the theatre shut.

In the mean time, Mr. Cooper went to Philadelphia to settle the long-protracted business of his breach of articles with Wignell and Reinagle ; and, having received some insult from their attorney, demanded satisfaction, and delayed his return to New-York. He had been announced in the bills, and the play changed and apologies made,

two nights in succession, which on his return he considered injurious to him, and gave notice to the manager that he would not continue with him.

Der Wildfang, as translated and metamorphosed into an opera, called *The Wild-goose Chase*, was first performed on the 24th of January, and continued a favourite as long as Hodgkinson continued to play the young baron. *The Force of Calumny* had likewise been successful; but the secession of Mr. Cooper in March was a severe blow to the theatre and its receipts. However, Kotzebue, with the manager's industry, kept up the business. *The Virgin of the Sun* was brought out at great expense, with splendid scenery and dresses, and was attractive through the season. *Pizarro*, composed from the original and Sheridan's alterations, was performed on the 26th: the concluding scene by Sheridan was omitted, and the sublime last lines of the author preferred. These two pieces, with all their faults, have great merit, and deserved the thanks of the "manager in distress."

That amusing egotist, Michael Kelly, who tells us many pleasant stories, though he "pushes the duke" rather too hard, and certainly must have had a father who "drew a long bow at the battle of Hastings"—Kelly says that Sheridan wrote the last part of the play of *Pizarro* "up-stairs in the prompter's room," "while the earlier parts of the play were acting" to an overflowing house; and farther, "that, at the time the house was overflowing, on the first night's performance, all that

was written of the play was actually rehearsing," and that, "until the end of the fourth act, neither Mrs. Siddons, nor Charles Kemble, nor Barrymore, had all their speeches for the fifth." Now, we all know that Pizarro was *written* by Kotzebue; and it is probable that a translation was put into Sheridan's hands, he knowing nothing of German, and making little alteration but for the worse (instance the change at the end), except here and there a line or a song, and the anti-Gallican speech put into the mouth of Rolla to serve the time—and yet, to take Mic's story, as it reads, we must believe that the *author-manager* had announced this great play of his, had paid severe attention to the splendid scenery and decorations, and yet had not written it when his actors were playing it.

That Mr. Cooper had become discontented with his situation in New-York, before the unfortunate failure in keeping his appointment and its consequences, no one can doubt. Hodgkinson's eternal appearance before the public, and eminent success in the German plays of the present season, threw the tragedian into the shade. The necessity for producing these attractive novelties rendered *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, and all the glories of the drama, for the time a dead letter. In proportion as his consequence decreased, the carelessness for performing his duty increased, and every new character Mr. Cooper *went on for* (to use the stage phrase), was almost invariably marred by an ignorance even of the words of the author. It was

perhaps well for his future fame and excellence that circumstances removed him from the stage of New-York at a time so inauspicious to his improvement as an actor.


The exertions of the manager had been so far successful that the engine he guided was kept in motion, and to the public eye appeared gay and prosperous. But all within was discord and discontent: even those plays which attracted the public, and gave bread to some and the means of destructive indulgence to others, were stigmatized by the actors as *Dutch stuff*, and by other epithets equally characteristic. But why dwell on evils of this disgusting kind? Can they be removed?

When a theatre is supported by a power, whether in a government or an association, which will not look for profit from it, but rather, if any deficiency of money from the receipts occurs, is ready to make it good, as in France—when it is so cherished and supervised, and is directed by a man who has taste and knowledge, and whose faculties may be devoted to the true purposes of the institution—then such a theatre will be truly a school of morality, of patriotism, and every virtue; the glory of the fine arts, and the delight of the wise and the good: such a theatre would be what the theatre of Weimar was when Göthe was its manager, or that of Berlin under the direction of Iffland—the one directed by the first poet of the age, the other by the first actor of Germany, and both supported

by government. But while actors squabble for parts and intrigue for benefits, and managers are looking to the means of raising money, the theatre must be—what it now is.

Benefit nights allowed to performers have ever been one source of mischief, one cause of degradation. This has been amended, but must be abolished before the theatre can be what, by its constituent parts and powers, it ought to be, or even what it has been.

It was the practice in the early days of the American drama for the performers of the company to *throw* for the nights of their respective benefits. As the benefits usually commenced in the spring and continued into summer, the earliest nights, or those of spring, were the prizes of the dice-box. We have seen that at one time the performer literally went from door to door to beg patronage. Other means, perhaps as degrading, and more injurious to the individual, have since been resorted to. The nights being determined, every thought of the performer is turned to promote his own particular interest: not more than the thoughts of men in other pursuits, but in a way more productive of jealousy and discord, from the nature of the institution, which is only fitted to be guided by one head and for one purpose. Plays are got up merely to make showbills, the public are deceived, and the pieces that are performed are sacrificed. Dryden, in a couplet, which I cannot recollect or



turn to, says that the actors murdered plays, and called it reviving them. Such is the fate of all revivals for benefit nights.

This abuse has been, by the energy of managers subsequent to the time of which we write, in some degree remedied ; but it should be abolished altogether. The actor ought to be liberally rewarded, according to his talents and his exertion of them, by a fixed income, and not left to look for an uncertain receipt from a benefit, which, like a prize in the lottery, is to pay his creditors, while he lives at an expense far beyond his income. We do not say that this is or has been generally the case ; that it has been in some instances we know, and the temptation ought to be removed.

While a tier of boxes is appropriated as a gallery to display the allurements of vice—while the actor looks for his reward from the popularity he can establish with the million, and the manager must please the vulgar or shut his theatre—the stage is not a school of morality : it is a mockery to call it so. By its nature, and the powers which it possesses, it is fitted to be one of the most effective.

CHAPTER XXV.

1800—Theatre at Mount Vernon Garden—Mr. Corré—Effects of the Departure of Mr. Cooper—Theatre opens Oct. 20th, 1800—Names of Performers—Mrs. Powell—Mr. Fennell—Fraternal Discord, or Bruder's Zwist—Mr. Harper—Mrs. Jefferson's first appearance—Mr. White—Mr. Winstanley—Joanna of Montfaucon—Abälino—Zschokke—De Montfort—Joanna Baillie.

On the 9th of July, 1800, a summer theatre was opened in New-York at a place called by the proprietor Mount Vernon Gardens, and which is now the north-west corner of Leonard Street and Broadway. This spot, as is mentioned in our fourth chapter, was in *good old times* far out of town, and here stood the White Conduit House, which, with its gardens, were the summer resort of our citizens for many years; as Brennon's (afterwards Tyler's, and again Hogg's, and now the S. W. corner of Spring and Hudson Streets) was in after-times.

We will insert the first bill issued by the manager of this theatre:—

MOUNT VERNON GARDEN. THEATRE. — JOSEPH CORRÉ presents his respects to the public: ever anxious to merit their patronage and contribute to their amusement, he has at a considerable expense engaged several of the principal performers belonging to the theatre, and proposes to exhibit theatrical entertainments on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, which he flatters himself will give additional satisfaction to those who have on former occasions honoured him with their company.

On Wednesday evening, July 9th, 1800, will be presented a much admired farce, in two acts, called *Miss in Her Teens*, or the *Medley of Lovers*. Capt. Flash, Mr. Jefferson; Capt. Loveit, Mr. Hallam, jun.; Puff, Mr. Hogg; Jasper, Mr. Fox; Fribble, Mr. Martin; Tag (with a song), Mrs. Seymour; Miss Biddy Bellair (with a song), Miss Brett. Tickets of admittance 4s. Performance to begin at 9 o'clock precisely.

Here we have a new manager. We have said that we do not think the man who assumed the direction of "that powerful and complicated engine, the theatre of a great metropolis" (meaning the New-York theatre in 1798), "was fitted for the arduous task." Let us examine the qualifications which his previous situations in life's drama had, as far as we can judge by the retrospect, bestowed on Mr. Joseph Corré.

Mr. Corré will be long remembered by the elder citizens of New-York as an honest, industrious, and prosperous man. He was a Frenchman, and is first remembered as a cook in the service of Major Carew, of the 17th light dragoons, the servant of his Britannic majesty. The first time the writer saw Corré, he stood with knife in hand, and in the full costume of his trade, looking as important as the mysteries of his craft entitle every cook to look, "with fair round belly, with good capon lined," covered with a fair white apron, and his powdered locks compressed by an equally white cap. His rotundity of face and rotundity of person—for he was not related to Hogarth's Cook at the gates of Calais—with this professional costume, made his figure, though by

no means of gigantic height, appear awfully grand, as well as *outré*, and it was stamped upon the young mind of his admirer in lights and shadows never to be erased. When we say the costume of his trade, we mean such as we see it in pictures, and as travellers see it ; the writer had at that time never seen other than a female cook, and such always black as Erebus. This was in the winter of 1776-7, before the New-Jersey militia and the great chief of our citizen-soldiers had driven the English to the protection of their ships and the safety of water-girt islands. It was at Perth Amboy that Corré stood lord of the kitchen, which his lord, the major of dragoons, had wrested from the black cook of the writer's father, and held by the same title which made the Corsican lord of the Continent of Europe—*military force*. The gallant major occupied *and improved* the upper part of the house, and Manager Corré ruled below.

Mr. Corré afterwards kept the City Tavern, in New-York, with reputation and success, and established those public gardens in State Street still existing, on the site of a part of what was Fort George when he first saw America. He was a thriving and worthy man, and his descendants have reason to respect his memory, although these situations in life might little qualify him to direct public taste, except in the way of his original employment. Mr. Corré and the writer were now, in 1800, both theatrical managers, and Mr. Corré

proved the most successful manager of the two. In regard to literary qualifications, Mr. Corré was probably not far behind many other managers who have since ruled the fates of actors and destinies of authors.

It certainly appears to have been bad *management* to lose Mr. Cooper from a company in which he was so prominent a member. To the director of the theatre he was not only valuable as a performer, but as a check to another performer, who had shown a disposition at all times to grasp and encroach. By the removal of the representative of Hamlet and Othello, Macbeth and Richard, Hodgkinson would be all-in-all with the playgoing public, and control his employer accordingly. It appears that, by a very unmanagerlike love of truth, Mr. Cooper was lost for a time to the stage of New-York. He had asked permission to absent himself from Tuesday to Friday, on urgent business in Philadelphia—on the latter day to be back to perform in the play of the evening. His punctuality was usually very great, even to an hour. On the afternoon of the day, he having been announced for the play as usual, a letter was received, explaining the cause of Mr. Cooper's detention in Philadelphia, prohibiting the making the cause known, and promising that nothing should prevent his "being ready for Monday night." In consequence of this, another play was substituted, and the audience were told that the change was in consequence of Mr. Cooper's having

failed to return at the time engaged for. Monday came, and another disappointment: he had been again announced, and did not appear; and another apology was made, and the business for succeeding nights arranged without him. He went on the 18th of December, and returned the 27th; and, as it appears at this distance of time, under the influence of irritation, determined to withdraw himself, as the manager had not used words which "might have been thrown together exculpatory of" himself, "without seriously inculpating" Mr. Cooper. A proposal was made by him that he should take a benefit, allowing half the profit to the manager, who, on an agreement that such an apparent permission to withdraw from his station should not be construed into an assent on the part of the director, made the arrangement.

Mr. Hodgkinson had previous to this, in conjunction with Mr. Hallam, two mortal enemies to each other, applied to one of the committee of proprietors for the lease of the theatre, and obtained a promise that they should have information before the theatre might be let to any other person. Now, by the removal of Mr. Cooper, the Hodgkinson family was the principal efficient force of the company, as will be seen by these names:— Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mr. and Mrs. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. Harper, Mr. Tyler, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Fox, Mr. Martin, Mr. Hallam, jun., Mr. Crosby, Mrs. Melmoth, Mrs. and Miss Brett, Misses Harding

and Hogg. Mr. Jefferson's excellence was great, but not to be put in competition with Hodgkinson's, even in low comedy. Mrs. Powell might have balanced Mrs. Hodgkinson in high comedy and in tragedy, but her success was literally prevented by the influence of Mr. Hodgkinson, who wished that his wife should be the first tragedian, as well as the first opera-singer, first comedy lady, first romp, and first chambermaid ; and if her figure had been equal to her talents, she would have seconded his views by her industry, and aptness for what is theatrically called study.

This summer, Mr. Wignell opened the first theatre in the capital of the United States, and called it "The United States' Theatre." His company for the winter of 1800 was considerably changed. Mrs. Morris went to England. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall, Mr. and Mrs. L'Estrange, two Mr. Warrells, Mr. Darley, sen., Mr. Doctor, Mr. Cromwell, Master Harris, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Warrell, Mrs. Gillingham, Mrs. Salmon, and the Misses Broadhurst and L'Estrange, are all off the list of the season ; and instead, we have Mr. Darley, jun., Mr. Prigmore, Mr. Durang, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Usher, and Mr. Hammond ; Mesdames Shaw, Snowden, and Stuart, and Misses Westray and E. Westray.

The theatre of New-York was not opened until the 20th of Oct. 1800. The fears of yellow fever, now considered as an annual scourge, kept the inhabitants from their winter homes, and traders from their periodical visits. The first play was

Lovers' Vows, Hodgkinson now playing Frederick, but very inferior to Cooper, and Mrs. Hodgkinson as much inferior to Miss E. Westray, in the character of Amelia.

Mr. Fennell, oppressed by poverty and debt, and in the possession of those who would not receive promises as current coin, applied to the manager for a benefit, and promised his aid as a performer. He might now have been of real service. He published a card, announcing that, by permission of Mr. Dunlap, his benefit would take place, and "respectfully solicits the patronage of the public:" "flatters himself that by the ready and favourable attention of his friends to the object of his benefit, he may be enabled to offer his contributory efforts for their amusement on this and future occasions." Mr. Fennell's benefit, on which occasion he played Zanga, took place on the 10th of November, and was productive.

Mr. and Mrs. Powell made their first appearance on the 31st of October, 1800, as Muley and Angela, in *The Castle Spectre*. Mrs. Powell has been mentioned before. She was brought to Boston from England in the year 1794 by Mr. C. Powell, she being then Miss Harrison, and Mr. S. Powell, her present husband, being one of the company. Her beauty and talents soon placed her at the head of her profession in the theatres of New-England.

The first play the manager produced this season was perhaps the most meritorious of the many

translations and alterations which came from his pen. *Fraternal Discord*, altered and adapted from Kotzebue's *Bruders Zwist*, was made more English, particularly in the *prominent characters* of Captain Bertram and his old brother-sailor and boatswain, than any of the previous pieces from the same source. The two parts were most admirably played, and nothing ever was finer of the kind than Jefferson's sailor, except the gouty captain of Hodgkinson. The merits of this piece have been so far acknowledged by English managers and actors, and even by American audiences, as to obtain a preference over the foreign version from the same source.

On the 28th of November, Mr. Harper, who abandoned the old American Company at the time Wignell separated his interests from those of Halam and Henry, in the year 1792, now reappeared in Charles Surface. He was the first actor who had played it in America: he had been the favourite of the New-York public; but the words "had been" are generally ominous. Mr. Harper was very little changed by eight years; but he had not improved; and those who remembered him as Charles Surface had seen Cooper, and Hodgkinson, and Moreton, represent the fascinating libertine, and wondered that they could ever have endured Mr. Harper. It was Mr. Harper's choice to play Charles; had he reappeared in a new piece, his reception would have been different: it was now cold. Mrs. Harper, his second wife, was,

as a performer, his pupil, and not entitled to further notice.

Mr. Jefferson had married in New-York, and Mrs. Jefferson became a member of the company about this time. She made her first appearance in the character of Louisa Dudley. As a wife and mother, she has played well her part in life's drama, and continues to merit applause in the characters.

On the 5th of December, an opera, the music put together by James Hewit, and the dialogue by the manager, was performed, not approved of, repeated once, and forgotten. It was called *The Knight of Guadalquiver*. The usual receipts of the theatre appear to have been for weeks below the expenses.

On the 19th of January, 1801, Mr. White, a young man from Worcester, Massachusetts, was brought out with some promise of success in Young Norval. Curiosity was excited, and a house of 614 dollars obtained. He had performed in Boston, when quite a boy, with that applause so freely and often so injudiciously bestowed on such efforts, had since studied law, and was at this time a tall handsome youth, but not destined by nature to shine. He was afterwards the author of three plays, which were performed in Boston, *The Clergyman's Daughter*, *The Poor Lodger*, and *Alonso*.

A play from Kotzebue, called *The Happy Family*, was played (an English version) unsuccessfully.

We have mentioned the benevolent attempts that had been made to enlighten the country by those luminaries from the land of our fathers, Milne, Mrs. Hatton, and Williams (Anthony Pasquin). Another English genius now appeared among us, and wished to have his oracles delivered from the stage. Mr. Winstanley called on the manager, and informed him that he had a comedy ready for representation, which would "draw twenty full houses in succession." "That is very desirable, sir." "Well, sir, what terms do you offer to successful authors?" "Half the profits of the third night's representation." "O, that's nothing, sir, for a piece that will overflow your treasury; nothing, sir, nothing!" "It is the established custom of my theatre." "Well, sir, when will it be played?" "I must first read it, and if I think it will do—" "Oh, sir, there's no doubt of that; it has been approved of by the first men in the country; it will *draw* during all your season." "I must judge of its merits for myself; and if I think it fit for representation—" "Fit!" "If I think it fit for representation, it shall be put in train." "And how long before it will be performed?" "Under favourable circumstances, three or four weeks." "Too long, sir; I wish to offer it to Wignell and Reinagle: after its run here, I intend to sell it to all the theatres on the Continent. You will have it played in three weeks?" "The first step must be my approbation of it; I make you no promise." "Well, sir, I will

read it to you." "Excuse me, I must read it myself, and at my own time." "But you can't read it; it—it—I must explain. If you will come to my lodgings I will read it to you: you will be delighted with it!"

Whether to get rid of importunity, or from a hope that the empty treasury might be filled, the manager consented to hear the author read his comedy the next evening. It was beyond measure long and as tedious as it was long. Every defect that was pointed out was in the author's eyes a beauty. The weary manager took the manuscript home, and promised an answer. It was as follows: "Being an author myself, I feel my situation peculiarly delicate when a new play is offered to me as a manager of the theatre: at the same time, I consider it my duty to give a prompt opinion and decision. It is my duty (and my interest) to present to the public those plays which I shall think most worthy of attention; therefore a piece, to be entitled to the time, labour, and expense of *getting up* (to use a technical phrase), ought to have a decided superiority over all the other new pieces which are in my possession, all having an equal claim on the ground of novelty. I frankly confess, that in my opinion your play, whatever its merits as a composition, does not possess this necessary superiority. As this opinion, if known, might injure your interests with Messrs. Wignell and Reinagle, to whom you first mentioned the piece,

I shall be silent on the subject, and advise your carrying into effect your purposed offer of it to those gentlemen."

If he took the last piece of advice is not known ; but the play was printed, and the manager's letter : the first (though not intended so to do) justified the opinion expressed in the last. But an inveterate enemy was made to the manager, whose inveterate foes at this time, and long afterwards, were a few of the friends of Mr. Winstanley—men of influence in matters connected with public amusement, associated as members of the Anacreontic Society, Rifle Company, and other clubs, whose chief business was singing and drinking. Mr. Winstanley's comedy was called *The Hypocrites Unmasked*.

Mr. Gilbert Stewart, the celebrated portrait-painter, used to tell, in his inimitable manner, an anecdote of Winstanley, which we will endeavour to relate : " When I lived at Germantown, a little, pert young man called on and addressed me thus : ' You are Mr. Stewart, sir, the great painter ? ' — ' My name is Stewart, sir.' " Those who remember Mr. Stewart's athletic figure, quiet manner, sarcastic humour, and uncommon face, can alone imagine the picture he would have made as Winstanley proceeded :—" ' My name is Winstanley, sir ; you must have heard of me.' ' Not that I recollect, sir.' ' No ! Well, Mr. Stewart, I have been copying your full-length of Washington ; I have made a number of copies ; I have now six

that I have brought on to Philadelphia ; I have got a room in the State-house, and I have put them up ; but before I show them to the public, and offer them for sale, I have a proposal to make to you.' 'Go on, sir.' 'It would enhance their value, you know, if I could say that you had given them the last touch. Now, sir, all you have to do is to ride to town, and give each of them a tap, you know, with your riding-switch—just thus, you know.'” Stewart, who had been feeding his capacious nostrils with Scotch snuff, shut the box, and deliberately placed it on the table. Winstanley proceeded, “‘And we will share the amount of the sale.’ ‘Did you ever hear that I was a swindler?’ ‘Sir ! Oh, you mistake. You know—’ The painter rose to his full height. ‘You will please to walk down stairs, sir, very quickly, or I shall throw you out at the window.’” The genius would have added another “you know ;” but seeing that the action was likely to be suited to the word, he took the hint, and preferred the stairs.

Kotzebue’s *Joanna of Montfaucon* was brought out, but without success, compared to former plays by this author. Mrs. Powell’s Joanna was a good performance ; but it had been desired that Mrs. Hodgkinson should appear as the heroine, and every opportunity was taken to prejudice the public against a lady who was the only rival in tragedy.

Fennell had been a short time one of the com-

pany, but did not interfere with the predominant interests. On the 5th of February he withdrew his services, that he might receive the benefit of the bankrupt law.

We have endeavoured to avoid the particulars of those continual conflicts which were taking place between the interests of the theatre and the interests of individual performers. To be faithful, instances perhaps ought to be given ; but they are painful in the recollection, and might be disagreeable to the reader in the recital. It has been seen that Mr. Hodgkinson retired from the partnership in the New-York business when it was unsuccessful, and went to Boston ; that he was there disappointed ; and that, finding the theatre he had left *looking up*, he proposed returning, as a partner or an actor. As the last he was accepted, at 100 dollars per week for himself and wife. His next step was a demand of 20 dollars, in addition, to be called an allowance for his wardrobe : this was granted—there was no refusing. Mr. Cooper having withdrawn himself, the next demand was an equal share in the profits for his services, and 50 dollars for Mrs. Hodgkinson : this was granted—but it was not enough. The next demand was that he should have an equal voice in the direction of the theatre. It was time to stop : it was refused. He was told that himself or agent might at any time inspect the books, and see that the division of profit was equitable. The result was—bitter hostility.

The manager had, in the midst of annoyance from sources as adverse to literary exertion as can well be imagined, translated and adapted to the American stage the play of *Abälino, the Great Bandit*. Mr. Hodgkinson was of course to play the hero, and Mrs. Hodgkinson the heroine. The author had marked the business of the play, as author and manager, and as such he superintended the rehearsal. On an appeal from an inferior performer, who was reciting correctly, but was interrupted by Mr. Hodgkinson, the manager directed the performer to "go on." This caused offence where causes of offence were looked for. The rehearsal proceeded; and literally, before the end of it, the author was threatened with personal violence. The unmoved manner in which the threat was received was attributed to his carrying pistols concealed about his person, and it was so reported. The success of the piece was great, both in New-York and elsewhere. It was performed for the first time in the English language the 11th of February, 1801.

At the time it was brought out in its new dress, the name of the German author was unknown to the translator, and remained so for some years. His name is Zschokke. He was born in Magdeburg, and left an orphan, to the care of distant relations, "a very unhappy, unloved, and therefore unloving boy." In crossing the Alps, when a young man, in order to visit Italy, he was persuaded to relinquish his travels and take charge of a school.

Having brought this seminary from a deplorable state, in which he found it, to a flourishing condition, he was rewarded with the honours of citizenship. His peaceful and useful life was interrupted by the French invasion. He found means to make himself beloved by his adopted fellow-citizens, and they employed him in administrative offices in several of the Swiss cantons ; but, finally withdrawing from public life, he married, and commenced author and editor of a newspaper. "*Abälino*," the play which has made him known to the American public, and entitles him to notice in a history of the American theatre, was written upwards of forty years ago, probably about the same time that his translator commenced dramatist by writing *The Father of an Only Child*. His principal works are novels, which have been very popular.

His *Abälino* has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and brought forward on most of the European stages under various disguises. It was first played, in a language foreign to its author, in New-York, and only played in America by its original title. Never was a play more successful, or a successful play less productive to its author or translator. It was overwhelmed by snow.

On the 13th of April, *De Montfort*, one of those grand and truly poetical, as well as philosophical dramas, written by Joanna Baillie, to portray the progress of the passions, was performed, but failed.

If Mr. Cooper, instead of Mr. Hodgkinson, had represented the character of De Montfort, it might not have been so. The last mentioned performer, with all his versatility and excellence, had nothing of the sublime or philosophic in his composition. He was incapable of understanding De Montfort. But let us remember that all the apparent sublimity and real black letter of John Kemble, and the greatly superior powers of his great sister, could not render *De Montfort* popular in London. It would not perhaps have been so in the time of Addison.

To dilate on the merits of Joanna Baillie, and to insert a notice of her literary life, would give us pleasure; but we are admonished that our limits are too circumscribed for even the facts immediately belonging to our history.

Charles Jared Ingersoll produced a tragedy at the Philadelphia theatre, called *Edwy and Elgiva*. Mr. Cooper and Mrs. Merry played the principal characters, and the piece met with success. This gentleman has written a tragedy, called *Julian the Apostate*, of much merit, as far as we can remember from reading the manuscript many years since. It has neither been played nor printed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Mr. Hodgkinson prefers being a salaried Performer to sharing Profits—Mr. White's *Romeo*—The Abbé de l'Épée—Philadelphia Company—Engagement of Mrs. Merry and Mr. Cooper for New-York—Starring—Miss E. A. Westray—Mr. Placide—Hodgkinson's *Falstaff*—Opening of the theatre in October, 1802—Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock—Mr. and Mrs. Johnson arrive from England—Mr. Prigmore—Mr. Wilson—*Blue Beard*—The *Wheel of Truth*—The *Voice of Nature*—Mr. Cooper departs for Drury Lane—Consequences of the *Wheel of Truth*—Jonathan Oldstyle and Andrew Quoz.

It now appearing that the profit upon the theatrical business when divided would not yield Mr. Hodgkinson as much as his salary, by the agreement made at Boston, and the addition made afterward, he asked to be released from the sharing engagement, and placed on the salary list again ; but demanded for himself and wife 130 dollars per week. The return to the salary list was finally agreed to, but the increase refused.

Mr. White attempted *Romeo*, and gave hopes of improvement ; but much improvement was wanted to constitute him an artist.

The friends of Mr. Cooper, and among them the manager, wishing his return to the New-York theatre, mutual explanations took place ; and the latter finding no difficulty in writing to invite him back, or in saying, "As far as my behaviour was influenced by anger in the unfortunate business

which separated us, it was unwarrantable—it is likewise highly probable that I thought too much of myself and allowed too little for you, and consequently was erroneous,” an engagement was concluded.

The next new play the manager produced was from the French, and called *The Abbé de l'Epee*. In this piece Mrs. Powell exceeded all expectation as the deaf and dumb boy. The public voice did her justice at last. But Mr. White failed altogether in the part allotted to him, and it was given to Mr. Martin.

As an instance of sensitiveness, or jealousy, or morbid feeling of some kind, this anecdote is worth recording. Hodgkinson had refused the part of greatest importance, as it respects the display of passion or of skill, in the *Abbé de l'Epee*, and the manager yielded and gave it to Mr. Harper, very much to the injury of the piece. A short time after, while the piece was still in rehearsal, and after it was known that Mr. Cooper was re-engaged, Mr. Hodgkinson's attorney, Richardson, called on the manager and read a paper addressed to him, complaining of a plot formed for the purpose of calling Hodgkinson to account for not playing the above-mentioned part in the new play ; and stating, “ that on a certain day some one of the conspirators is to call upon the manager for the reason Mr. Hodgkinson is not in the play, who is to answer that he refused ; and then he is to be *cut up* for his slight of the public.” He goes on to say that he hopes

and believes that "the manager is not in the plot, but as *he* had read the play in a *certain lawyer's office*, he must know who the persons are, and have it in his power to prevent it; and that if it is not prevented, every thing must be at an end between the manager and Mr. Hodgkinson." As the accused and suspected manager had never read his play in a "*lawyer's office*," and knew nothing of any conspiracy, he dismissed the agent satisfied by the assurance. But not so his principal—he wrote to the author of the play in these words: "I am satisfied that *you* are no way concerned in the business which hurt me so much; but my authority on the intended plan I think unquestionable:" and went on to say, that, as but a few had read the play, the author may "stop the attempt." He then proposes *friendship*, and pledges himself "not to be a candidate for the theatre, but to support the present lessee in it;" and concludes by asking for a copy of Abälino, "*as a matter of justice, if not of friendship.*"

Mr. White consented to being withdrawn from the character of St. Alme, in the new piece, and announced it to the public as his wish, he finding the character too arduous; Martin prepared for the part, and Hodgkinson took Martin's place. The play was eminently successful.

Mr. Darley, having thrown up his commission as an officer in the marine corps of the United States, had returned to the stage of Philadelphia, and Miss E. Westray had become Mrs. Darley. With this

accession, and that of Mr. Cooper, and with the very great improvement of Mr. Wood, who now stood equal to any actor in the first line of genteel comedy, Mr. Wignell's company this season ranked higher than that of New-York.

On the 12th March, 1801, the New-York manager made a visit to Philadelphia, to make arrangements for future business. The consequence was that Mrs. Merry and Mr. Cooper were engaged for a short *summer season*, to commence in July, and the latter concluded his engagement for the ensuing winter. Mrs. Merry was engaged at 100 dollars per week and a clear benefit, and Mr. Cooper for 30 dollars per week for the summer (as long as the theatre could be kept open profitably), and for the ensuing winter at 50 dollars for 34 weeks.

Dining one day with Wignell, the author of *The Father of an only Child* found himself in company with two of the original performers of the company of 1789—Messrs. Morris and Wignell.

Mr. Whitlock had been the manager of the Boston theatre for the last season, and now intending to relinquish the business, Mrs. Whitlock applied for a situation in New-York. Her words were, "I have great obligations to the town of Boston; yet when Mr. Whitlock gives up the management, I fear it will fall into the power of those whose pleasure heretofore consisted in making me unhappy." Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock were engaged for the ensuing season.

That Mrs. Merry should be brought to New-York as the sun of the drama, around which the great and little planets and their satellites were to revolve, was a sore mortification to one who could allow of no merit out of the precincts of his own family. It must have been humiliating to consent to receive half salaries after the close of the regular season, knowing that the principal attraction was in another, and that *that* other was to receive the greater share of the profit from the business. But then a refusal would not stop the scheme, and Cooper would stand alone as the hero if Hodgkinson refused. After much struggling and many a hard epithet bestowed even on the very superior woman who, for the first time in America, was brought forward as (what is now called) a star, Mr. Hodgkinson submitted.

What is called "*starring*" is one cause of the degradation of the drama. The regular company of a theatre may be of an inferior order, provided a succession of *stars* keep up attraction and fill the treasury. The manager has another advantage; by bringing in a *star*, he can lessen the influence of a performer over the public, and free himself from an oppressive tyranny. But if a theatre is ever established on the plan we have suggested, to be supported by an enlightened government, there would be no starring.

The delicate health of Mrs. Merry had nearly broken up the scheme for reopening the New-York

theatre. On the 10th of June, the following letter was received from Baltimore :

To WM. DUNLAP, Esq.

Sir—To the last moment have I delayed writing, expecting that every hour would bring me a return of health ; but heavy is this short task of telling you the opinion of my physicians, that my recovery is far distant ; the complaint is in my breast, and is severe indeed ; it has prevented my performing for many nights past, and I have given up the idea of being able to appear again this season. I enclose a letter from Doctor Crawford, as my own feelings tell me his judgment is not erroneous : rash indeed would be the attempt of fulfilling my engagement with you this summer. Sincerely regretting the disappointment to myself and the inconvenience it may be to you, I remain, &c. &c.

A. MERRY.

This was accompanied by a note from her physician, fully corroborating this statement : he says, " It has been obvious to all who have witnessed your sufferings, that, on every occasion of considerable exertion since the commencement of the warm weather, you have been exhausted to an alarming degree."

In reply to Mrs. Merry's letter, it was said—" I confide in the generosity of your interpretation when I proceed to state that I have not only made numerous engagements, but have even issued notes, payable the first week in July, for which I have no other resource but the profits expected from your appearance. All this, or any pecuniary distress which I may experience, is nothing when weighed in the balance against the health of any individual—when your health is in question, it is less than nothing. But would the journey injure

you? might it not be serviceable if made at leisure, and by short stages?" It was then suggested that her coming on and performing twice for the director, and once for herself, if not found injurious, might prove beneficial to her health. This was answered thus: "I will be in New-York by the 29th (June), after that all must depend upon circumstances. I again repeat that every exertion I can make you may depend upon."

On the 18th of June, 1801, Miss E. A. Westray made her first appearance in New-York as Angela, in *The Castle Spectre*, playing for the benefit of her stepfather, Mr. Simpson. This lady was afterward a performer of some note and consequence as Mrs. Villiers and Mrs. Twaits.

To support the treasury, the stage was degraded by the exhibitions of a man who could whirl round on his head with crackers and other fireworks attached to his heels.

On the 1st of July, 1801, the theatre was reopened, having been prepared for summer weather, with *Venice Preserved*; *Belvidera*, *Pierre*, and *Jaffier*, by Mrs. Merry, Messrs. Cooper and Hodgkinson. Receipts, 646 dollars.

On the 3d, *Romeo and Juliet* was played. On the 5th, Mrs. Merry played Calista, in *The Fair Penitent*. The unexpected excellence of Mr. Cooper's Lothario is more vivid in our remembrance than any other portion of this very perfect exhibition. The warmth of the weather and the exertion brought on a renewal of the great ac-

tress's indisposition, and she announced that the next evening's play must be the last but one. On the 8th, she played Beatrice, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *The Orphan* was given out for her benefit and last appearance. Cooper and Hodgkinson both solicited her to play for their respective benefits, but she answered that if she could play, it would be for the manager. The receipts on her night were 884 dollars.

Mr. Placide, manager of the Charleston theatre, the father of the excellent comedian now (in 1832) on the stage of the Park theatre, was, in 1801, with Mrs. Placide, in New-York, and had engaged, as a rope-dancer and pantomime performer, to join Hodgkinson and others in a summer theatre at Corr  s gardens, at the corner of what is now (1832) Leonard Street and Broadway. Placide was dexterous and powerful on the rope; his wife, whom he married at Charleston, after the loss of the excellent dancer and pantomime actress who accompanied him to America, was Miss Wroughten, the daughter of the celebrated actress of that name, who is better known as Mrs. Pownall in this country. Mr. Placide was likewise a great pantomime clown. He had exhibited in various parts of Europe, and was first seen by the writer in 1785 at Sadler's Wells, London, where he went by the name, from his feats as a tumbler, of "the great Devil." Placide's recital of the effects of a panic upon him, when exhibiting before Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, made so strong an

impression upon us, that we are induced to think it may interest our readers. It was common for him at that time to perform the enormous feat of throwing himself at a leap, on the stage, over ten, twelve, or more files of soldiers, ranged two and two from the back to the front of the stage, and standing with their muskets perpendicularly erect, and the bayonets bristling above them. On this occasion he had announced his leap over sixteen files of the grenadiers, so arranged. When the moment approached, he, for the first time, felt the sickening sensation of misgiving—then fear—then panic—a full conviction that he should fail, and fall on the points of the bayonets glittering before him. He could not think of flinching from the trial, and his king and queen present. The honour of a tumbler forbade the thought—the drops of sweat oozed from his forehead—the prediction of his fear fulfilled itself—he dashed forward—threw himself into the air—and, before he had passed the bayonets, found himself falling on their points. A cry from the audience perhaps saved him by shaking the steady ranks of the grenadiers—he fell—was wounded slightly in body, but in reputation most grievously. The last wound was only cured by adding another file of grenadiers to the line, and springing desperately over the whole.

Mrs. Merry's benefit took place on Friday, and Monday was fixed for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, both having had benefits a few weeks before. Hodgkinson had engaged Placide to get

up a pantomime, and perform in it, and likewise to exhibit on the rope, for his night.

On Friday the 10th, during the rehearsal previous to Mrs. Merry's benefit, Mr. Hodgkinson addressed the manager, saying, that the pantomime getting up for him could not be ready by Monday night, and he could not take the night. Astonishment was expressed at his proposing to throw up a night fixed for a benefit, and he was reminded that all the machinists had been employed from Tuesday last, and were employed then for him. This he acknowledged, "but how could he take Monday—he had not determined his play—besides, the house would be crowded to-night, it was very hot, the people would not come again on Monday—the house might be closed for one night—he would take Wednesday—the company would give up one night." He was told that such a sacrifice should not be asked of them. "Would not Robinson take it?" "I shall not ask him. If you, from Tuesday to Monday, could not get ready (the time he had for preparation), how is he to prepare in two days?" The conversation was broken off, and renewed in presence of Mr. Cooper. The manager offered to take the night, provided Mr. Hodgkinson would give up Mr. Placide's first appearance to him, and take the second. "What shall I get by that?" was the answer. Cooper proposed to take the night, provided he could prevail on Mrs. Merry to play for him, with consent of the manager. The

consent was given, and she agreed, provided Mr. Cooper was permitted to come to Philadelphia and play for her benefit; and, as she had said she would only stay, if she staid at all, for the manager's benefit, she insisted that half the profits of the night should be his. On these terms she stopped her preparations for departure, and her trunks were relanded from the packet, she having only retained the dress necessary for her benefit play. Previous to obtaining this arrangement, Mr. Hodgkinson, in presence of Mr. Cooper, was told that the night should be given to the last named, and Wednesday to him. Mr. Cooper asked him to play Horatius in *The Roman Father*.—"Yes—but who is to play Horatia?" "Mrs. Melmoth," laughing, "or perhaps Mrs. Merry, if I can prevail on her."

On learning that Mrs. Merry had consented to stay and play for his rival, the rage of the jealous and disappointed man was extreme. He threatened not to play for her benefit, which was to take place that night—to leave New-York: he said, "a plot was formed to ruin him—she never intended to go on Monday." He concluded, however, that it was best to go to the theatre, play the character he was announced for (Castalio), and try his persuasive powers again with the lady. But they were not of the kind suited to her. She persisted in refusal—he offered money—she turned from him.

The next day, want of iteration not being his

vice, he requested the manager to ask Mrs. Merry to stay and play for his night. The answer was, "I will ask her, as she has swerved from her first resolution, to continue this week ; play for you on Wednesday, and me on Friday." On this being proposed, she politely declined ; intimating that if importuned, she should consider herself bound to serve the manager. He dropped the subject.

In the afternoon, Mr. Hodgkinson called to know Mrs. Merry's answer, and said he had in the mean time written to her and received a polite but positive refusal, adding, "It seems to me she wants to be offered money." It was replied, "Depend upon it, no. Your offer of that nature last evening gave great offence." In truth, she had expressed her disgust at his indelicacy.

It is due to Mrs. Merry to state that, on the whole receipts of her benefit being presented to her, she would not receive the money, as her health had not permitted her to fulfil her original engagement ; and with great difficulty she could be prevailed upon to accept, in addition to her salary, 750 of the 884 dollars received.

On the evening of Mr. Cooper's benefit, Monday, the 13th of July, 1801, the printer's boy put the proof of the next night's bill into the hand of the manager for approbation, and he found it headed by an assertion that he had assured to Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson "the services of Mrs. Merry at their benefit, but that she had absolutely declined playing for them." He wrote the words, "in case

it had been in her power to fulfil her *first* engagement," and carried them to Mr. Hodgkinson for his consent to their insertion. He refused. "Then an account of the whole transaction shall be published." He then assented. Notwithstanding this, the bills, as first printed, with the falsehood at the top, were attempted to be circulated, and in part succeeded ; and the same was published in one of the morning papers — with difficulty prevented in the others.

We have been particular in stating this transaction, as it relates to a most distinguished actress and uncommonly fine woman ; and as on the files of the newspapers of the day may be found a formal statement, signed " John Hodgkinson," saying, that the services of Mrs. Merry had been secured to him — that he had been induced to engage on the assurance that she should perform for his benefit, and other misrepresentations ; and as the life of a gentleman who had been privy to the affair, and was so far interested for the lady as to come forward to vindicate her from what he thought and called a rude attack, was jeopardized on the occasion.

William Coleman, Esq., long editor of the Evening Post of New York, under the signature of " Amicus," reprobated the attempt to injure Mrs. Merry with the public. The consequence was the long misstatement of July 15th, and rejoinders, which were near producing an appeal to the pistol. We have no reason to believe that Hodgkinson

would have thought of such an argument, but he belonged to the English rifle company of the time, and they considered the honour of the corps concerned.

In the bills and advertisements of the theatre for July 20th, the manager took the opportunity of paying a just tribute to the merits and conduct of Mrs. Merry, and of stating "that Mr. Hodgkinson disclaimed any intention of charging the director of the theatre with any breach or violation of contract." By the aid of the peace-maker "if," bloodshed was prevented. We conclude this portion of theatrical history, with a part of a letter from the lady, whose favours were so violently sought.

—"I own to you that I have been severely mortified to see my name so frequently before the public, in the New-York prints, and that attached to the name of a man whose conduct I despised, even before he had the opportunity of insulting me.

"This is the second public attack of Mr. Hodgkinson within a short space of time—the subjects females. Surely the people of your city must think of him as he deserves, and feel that all his assertions are indelicate, inhuman, and unmanly.

"On my return from the theatre, the last evening of my performance, I told Mr. Coleman that if he should observe any further insult from Mr. H. in the bills or papers, I must feel it as an obligation, as he was acquainted with all the circum-

stances, if he would answer for me, and not suffer Mr. H. to make an impression on the public mind entirely in his own favour. I do feel myself greatly obliged by Mr. Coleman, and only regret the *early* insertion of the first number of *Amicus*—all I wished was to stand on the defensive. I own myself a coward when armed against such a man, so unprincipled as Mr. H.” This is dated from Philadelphia, July 24th, 1801.

The summer theatre, at what was called Mount Vernon Gardens, was opened on the 10th of August, 1801. Company—Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mrs. and Miss Brett, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Darley, jun., Mr. and Mrs. Placide, Mr. Shapter, Mr. Story, Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, and Miss E. A. Westray. Miss Broadhurst appeared for a benefit.

The elder Mr. Darley, before mentioned as one of Wignell’s company in 1793, and long a singer at Covent Garden, played Hawthorn, in *Love in a Village*, on the 29th of August. Mr. Hodgkinson, among his many parts in opera, as in every other department of the drama, was a very good Young Meadows.

Mr. and Mrs. Jones came to this country this summer. Mr. Wignell converted the building, now (in 1832) the post-office, in the city of Washington, into a theatre. The opening play was *Venice Preserved*: Pierre, Mr. Cooper; Belvidera,

Mrs. Merry. His winter establishment was deprived of Mr. Cooper, but enriched by the accession of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock, from the Boston Company. Mr. Green also, who had been absent from Philadelphia some years, rejoined the company.

Again yellow fever prevented the opening of the New-York theatre at that time which is most propitious to the interest of the proprietor. On the 16th of November, 1801, the play of *Lovers' Vows* (Cooper playing Frederick), and the farce of *Fortune's Frolic*, were performed. The company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, Mrs. Melmoth, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Fennell, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mrs. Simpson, and her youngest daughter, Miss E. A. Westray, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mr. Tyler, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson, Mr. Martin, Mrs. and Miss Brett, Mrs. King, Misses Hogg and Harding, and Mr. Fox.

On the 4th of December, 1801, a farce, called *Where is he?* by the manager, from the German, was played with success. The *Force of Calumny* was successful this season, but in the commencement the business was a losing one. Mr. Cooper's performances now assumed a higher tone, and he became the acknowledged hero of tragedy. This caused another uneasiness to the rival, besides jealousy at seeing the tragedian's success. As every *good part* in after-pieces had been eagerly sought for, it now happened that when

Mr. Cooper was the Richard, Mr. Hodgkinson might be called on for a character in a farce. This was represented as degrading.

On the 29th of January, 1802, Mr. Bland, a brother of Mrs. Jordan's, from the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane, and Haymarket, made his first appearance in America under the name of Wilson. He played Frank Oatland, in the comedy of *A Cure for the Heart Ache*. He proved to be a man of indifferent character, but possessed talents for the stage. He afterwards was very serviceable in getting up the opera of *Blue Beard*, and played Shakabac with effect. This play, being got up with great care and expense, was successful, and yielded a support to the theatre for a time.

On the 26th of March, Schiller's *Fiesco*, curtailed, was performed (Cooper playing Fiesco): it was coldly received.

On the 28th of March, 1802, Mr. John Brown Williamson, one of the managers of Charleston theatre, previously a manager of the Boston theatre, and in 1786 an actor on the boards of the Haymarket theatre, London, died in the city of Charleston, South Carolina.

Again the time had arrived for arranging a company for the ensuing winter. Offers were made to Mr. Hodgkinson for himself and wife, and the negociation broken off upon his demanding that neither of them should be required to aid or assist in any theatrical piece, "except as principal per-

formers in principal characters," and that, in any new or revived piece, "they shall be secured, and have a right to demand an equal number of principal characters with any other principal performer or performers, as well in tragedy as comedy"—all this formally drawn up by his lawyer. The answer was brief: "the demand cannot be complied with, without depriving me of that power which I consider as the basis of my future prosperity." Measures were taken to coerce a settlement of accounts, and Mr. Hodgkinson notified thereof. He then employed friends of the manager to interfere, and finally engaged himself and family for next season on the former terms, with unessential variation. Mr. Whitlock engaged for himself and wife.

It was probably during the season of 1801-2, that Doctor Stock, an English or Welsh gentleman, produced a comedy, which was played with success in Philadelphia, called *A Wedding in Wales*. The doctor had made himself obnoxious to the government of his country by his efforts in the cause of reform, and took refuge in America. He however, returned home, and perhaps is living, and we hope, still a reformer. In 1804, our friend, William B. Wood, saw him in Liverpool. The doctor altered for the stage some of the translations from Kotzebue, by Miss Plumptre. The *Wedding in Wales* is said to have been a tame, genteel production, but not calculated to last.

Mrs. Merry, having arranged characters for two weeks, came on to New-York, and played Juliet, on the 19th of April, 1802, to 1000 dollars; Calista, on the 22d, to 676 dollars; Belvidera, on the 24th, to 624 dollars; Isabella, the 26th, to 760 dollars; Lady Teazle, the 28th, to 750 dollars; Jane Shore, the 30th, to 800 dollars; and Monimia, the 3d of May, to 900 dollars.

Mr. Johnson, in a letter from Hull, concluded an engagement for himself and wife.

Mr. Hodgkinson played Falstaff, for the first time, on the 5th of June, 1802. It was overcharged and hard. It was not like his general comedy playing, which, though sometimes too broad, was the reverse of hard in the sense here meant.

Mr. Cooper having informed the manager that he had received an offer of a purse, to be made up in Philadelphia, if he could come on and play the next winter, by which 3000 dollars would be added to his income, he was told that no obstacle should be raised to his good fortune. The scheme, however, did not take effect.

On the 5th of July, Sunday being the 4th, the rain driving the merrimakers of the day from the public gardens in the evening, the house overflowed to that vile trash, the play of *Bunker's Hill*, and a piece by the manager called *The Retrospect*. The receipts were the greatest ever known at that time, 1245 dollars.

On the 11th of October, 1802, the theatre of

New-York was opened for the season with *Adel-morn* and *The Quaker*. The company consisted of Mr. Cooper, Mr. Fennell, Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock, Mr. Tyler, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mrs. and Miss Brett, Miss Hogg, Mr. Martin, Mr. Hallam, junior, Messrs. M'Donald, Shapter, and Robinson, and Mr. Wilson (alias Bland).

Mrs. Melmoth withdrew for a time from before the public, and Miss Harding had been removed from Mr. Hodgkinson's house. Mrs. King, who had been always what is called a dead weight, had become the wife of some one on Long Island, and lived, as we hope, a useful member of society to a good old age. Her sister, Miss Brett, was still on the salary list, and a member of Mr. Hodgkinson's family, but unable to be of any service to the company. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson had not yet arrived from England.

Mr. Whitlock made his first appearance as Major O'Flaherty, and Mrs. Whitlock, on the 6th of November, played Lady Randolph, Cooper playing Young Norval, Hodgkinson Old Norval, Tyler Lord Randolph, and Fennell Glenalvon. Certainly the play had been seldom better performed. The Glenalvon of Mr. Fennell was the best character he ever played, and appeared to the writer better than even John Palmer's. Mrs. Whitlock, though a fine actress, was not Mrs. Siddons, but

she imitated her ; and in parts of this character was extremely like her great sister. Mr. Hodgkinson's Old Norval was not equal to Henderson's, but when Henderson played the part at Covent Garden, neither the young Norval nor the Lady Randolph were equal to those of Cooper and Mrs. Whitlock ; and Mr. Hodgkinson's representation was replete with excellence.

The manager had translated from the German and brought out, on the 15th of November, a play called *Peter the Great*. Mr. Cooper, Mr. Hodgkinson, and Mrs. Whitlock, were the principal performers, but the piece did not live.

At this time Mr. and Mrs. Johnson arrived, and the company was of course uncommonly strong. She made her first appearance in Lady Bell Bloomer, in *Which is the Man?* with great eclat, and her second in Lady Teazle, with her husband's Sir Peter. Her Lady Teazle was deemed even superior to Mrs. Merry's by Mr. Coleman, the editor of the Evening Post ; and Mr. Irving, in the Morning Chronicle, gave due praise to the improved acting of a lady always justly a favourite. The arrival of this accomplished and elegant actress and her success were the cause of bitter animosity on the part of the Hallam family, and of threats and abuse not to be recorded.

Mr. Prigmore, the hero of the tale of the widow and breeches, in a former chapter, had applied for an engagement, and been received on a salary of

14 dollars per week, to do any thing ; but feeling important again, or a desire to become so, wrote a letter saying that he had been *forfeited* for not attending in a certain piece, when directed so to do, complaining of injustice, concluding : “ I may without boast say that I am held in as much estimation as any actor in the company, in my line of business.” In answer, he was referred to the letter which engaged him, in consequence of a very humble application, “ only adding, in consequence of yours now before me, I shall not again forfeit you, but, if you neglect the business assigned by me, consider you as declining your engagement.”

On the 3d of December, 1802, Mr. Wilson, or Bland, the brother of Mrs. Jordan, was carried to jail for debt, and the next day, poor Fennell was again incarcerated. His hope of relief, if not release, was placed on a farce he had written, and which the manager determined to bring out immediately, and to which, in the *bringing out*, the author and principal actor made such additions as called it into more notice than its merits would have done, as we shall see in the sequel.

Mr. John Kemble having retired from the stage at this time, and gone on a tour to the continent, Mr. Cooper had an invitation to try Drury Lane theatre, and wishing so to do, the manager immediately gave his assent, though aware of the difficulties he must encounter when deprived of his talents. He likewise agreed to Mr. Cooper's pro-

posal of playing a week in Philadelphia, the profits to be shared equally.

On the 17th of December, 1802, *Le Jugement de Salomon* was placed by a friend in the hands of the manager, and on the 22d he had finished a translation of it, adapted to his theatre. On the 26th, he began to write a play called *The Blind Boy*, altered from Kotzebue's *Epigram*.

On the 1st of January, 1803, *Blue Beard* was played to 1,090 dollars. Thus far the business of the theatre had been prosperous this season, and Mr. Cooper, having in Philadelphia played Hamlet, Richard, Pierre, and Macbeth, to houses averaging 1,100 dollars each, the division of profit to the New-York establishment was 475 dollars. On the 10th, he sailed in the Chesterfield packet for England.

On the 14th of January, Fennell's farce of *The Wheel of Truth* was brought out, with Mrs. Johnson's *Lady Townley* preceding it, and the receipt was 215 dollars. The farce was played on its second night for the author's benefit, and the receipts were 600 dollars. Mr. Hodgkinson played a speaking Harlequin, and his figure in the motley dress gave occasion to some squibs, which annoyed him sadly. Washington Irving wrote for the *Morning Chronicle* under the signature of Jonathan Oldstyle, and though always playful, the irritation caused was excessive. In a supposed letter from *Quox* to Jonathan, the actor's rights are thus

defended, and Jonathan reprimanded for noticing certain peculiarities in a great performer's playing and dress. "Odsbud, hath not an actor eyes, and shall he not wink?—hath not an actor teeth, and shall he not grin?—feet, and shall he not stamp?—lungs, and shall he not roar?—breast, and shall he not slap it?—hair, and shall he not *club* it?" The immediate cause of this was a parody, put in Harlequin's mouth, of Shylock's "Hath not a Jew," &c. &c. *Harlequin-Shylock*, as one of the journals called him, says, "Hath not an actor eyes, feeling, &c.—if you wrong us, shall we not retort?" &c.

The play of *Liberal Opinions* was brought out—Old Liberal, Mr. Hogg; Young Liberal, Mr. Hodgkinson; but brought neither honour nor profit, and was laid aside. Mr. Hogg had by this time acquired confidence, when he played in old men or humorists, and had become a favourite with the audience.

On the 31st of January, a young man of the name of Cox made his first appearance in Theodore, in the manager's play of *The Mysterious Monk, or Ribbemont*. The house was thin, the applause little. The papers next day damned the debutant with faint praise, and the play, by the advice to return it to the shelf.

The manager's new play from *The Judgment of Solomon* of the French, was received with great applause, which, and its subsequent success, was

without doubt owing to the author's adopting the same title for the piece as that by which it was played in London (*The Voice of Nature*), and calling the characters by the same names. It was supposed to be foreign, and it was admired accordingly. Such were the prejudices which the pioneers of American literature had to encounter. When *The Italian Father*, which was highly extolled when supposed to be a German play, was revived and known to be American, it was coldly received; and we shall have to record a similar instance in respect to Mr. Barker's play of *Marmion*—for the same spirit prevailed then in Philadelphia.

The receipts were now so inadequate to support the theatre, that on the 5th of February it was closed, and a part of the company went on to Philadelphia, and played with Wignell's company, now no longer directed by him.

Early in January, 1803, Mr. Wignell was married to Mrs. Merry, who appeared for the first time as Mrs. Wignell on the 12th day of that month, in the character of Rosamunda, in the writer's play, from Zschokke, of *Abälino*. This was the first time *that piece* was performed in Philadelphia. Before the end of the month Mr. Wignell died, in consequence of injury received from a spring-lancet in blood-letting. Mrs. Wignell and Mr. Reinagle directed the business for some time, and Mr. Wood went to England to engage performers.

In the month of February, before the temporary closing of the theatre, Mr. Hodgkinson and Mr. Coleman had a second serious difference, arising from some severe remarks made by Mr. Coleman upon a portion of *The Wheel of Truth*, known to be written by Mr. Hodgkinson, and introduced as additions to the part he played.

Thus *The Wheel of Truth*, which was the slightest piece of patchwork imaginable, the only plot being to put the pretenders to a young lady into a wheel, and reward him with the fair who came out unchanged ; and whose only aim was to relieve Fennell, by giving him a benefit, and to gratify Hodgkinson, by putting a critic (such as the actors would paint a critic on *their* performances, and who had censured them,) into the wheel, and turning him out “ a goose”—thus, this most flimsy farce was made of consequence—first, by Irving’s pleasantries, and then by Coleman’s severe animadversions on the merits, as players, of Fennell and Hodgkinson.

Coleman said that, instead of the silly questions put to the Critic by Harlequin, and more silly answers returned, as the actors had it all in their own hands *now*, being both authors and players, they should have made the Critic utter such absurdities as these : “ Hodgkinson has merit, &c. ; but his tragedy we pronounce rant, his comedy frequently degenerates into vulgar farce, from a want of chasteness of demeanour—his broad farce is the

most successful ; in Ruttikin and Shelly he is at home—buffoons are his forte. As Hodgkinson offends by his assurance, we are sometimes embarrassed by Fennell's diffidence," which he attributes to not having studied his author, and being afraid of "coming to a stand-still." This produced an attack upon Coleman, which was signed "Justice," and which was pronounced by Hodgkinson, in a piece the next day, to be "correct generally in the charges against Coleman, but in part erroneous."

On Hodgkinson's disavowing the additions to the farce, and stating that "he had no agency whatever in the production of that piece," John Wells, Esq., who managed the matter as Coleman's friend, one of the rifle company, appearing on the part of the actor, advised (although the evidence to the contrary was before them) that Mr. Coleman should say, "*that* being the case, he is sorry he was so severe upon him ; for, considered only as the actor, he should certainly have stopped short of making him the subject of his mirth." Coleman then notices what he calls a "very rude attack" upon him in *The Citizen* of February 3d, 1803, signed "Justice," which in the paper of next day Hodgkinson in his own name had declared to be "the greater part *correct*, a few assertions *erroneous*," and Hodgkinson is called upon to "point out the parts to which he refers as correct, and those he considers as erroneous." Hodgkinson acknowledged that, in respect to this publication, he had written *with too much haste* ; says he "does

not know the author,"—that in respect to all the charges or assertions in that piece, nothing is true but that *he* became acquainted with Mr. Coleman in the year 1799—that *he* gave him orders for admission into the theatre, which were amply returned by Mr. C.'s services as a lawyer: that in respect to the compromise in the affair of Mrs. Merry, it was settled on fair and equal principles, and "not at all as a measure into which either of us was driven from any threatened or apprehended consequences."

The pleasant effusions of an author, who, since the time of which we are writing, has become an object of attention and admiration in both hemispheres, will be better understood and appreciated in connexion with our work than in an isolated situation; or even when read in the journal where first published. We speak of Mr. Washington Irving's communications to his brother's paper, *The Morning Chronicle*, under the names of Jonathan Oldstyle and Andrew Quoz. Under this impression we insert two or three of these communications, and a portion of one or two others, as intimately connected with the subjects of this chapter. It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that the *portly gentleman* and the Merry Andrew are the same actor, Mr. Hodgkinson; and the elegant lady who is censured for "mimickry" is Mrs. Johnson. The *white lion* is Prigmore, the hero of the breeches. The *Tripolitan Prize* was one of those vile alterations of an English piece, so justly censured by

Mr. Wells in the critique published in an earlier chapter of this work.

I was much taken with the playbill of last week, announcing, in large capitals, *THE BATTLE OF HEXHAM*; or, *Days of Old*. Here, said I to myself, will be something grand—*days of old*!—my fancy fired at the words. I pictured to myself all the gallantry of chivalry; here, thought I, will be a display of court manners and true politeness; the play will no doubt be garnished with tilts and tournaments; and as to those *banditti*, whose names make such a formidable appearance on the bills, they will be hung up, every mother's son, for the edification of the gallery.

With such impressions, I took my seat in the pit, and was so impatient that I could hardly attend to the music, though I found it very good. The curtain rose. Out walked the queen, with great majesty; she answered my idea, she was dressed well, she looked well, and she acted well. The queen was followed by a pretty gentleman, who, from his winking and grinning, I took to be the court fool. I soon found out my mistake. He was a courtier "*high in trust*," and either general, colonel, or something of *martial* dignity. They talked for some time, though I could not understand the drift of their discourse, so I amused myself with eating peanuts.

In one of the scenes I was diverted with the stupidity of a corporal and his men, who sung a dull song, and talked a great deal about nothing, though I found by their laughing there was a great deal of fun in the corporal's remarks. What this scene had to do with the rest of the piece, I could not comprehend; I suspect it was a part of some other play thrust in here by accident.

I was introduced to a cavern where there were several hard-looking fellows sitting round a table carousing. They told the audience they were *banditti*. They then sung a *gallery song*, of which I could understand nothing but two lines:

The Welchman had like to 've been chok'd by a mouse,
But he pull'd him out by the tail!

Just as they had ended this elegant song, their banquet was disturbed by the *melodious sound* of a horn, and in marched a *portly gentleman*, who I found was their captain. After this worthy gentleman had fumed his hour out; after he had slapped his breast and drawn his sword half a dozen times, the act ended.

In the course of the play I learned that there had been, or was, or would be, a battle; but how, or when, or where, I could not understand. The banditti once more made their appearance, and frightened the wife of the portly gentleman, who was dressed in man's clothes, and was seeking her husband. I could not enough admire the dignity of her deportment and the unaffected gracefulness of her action; but who the captain really was, or why he ran away from his spouse, I could not understand. However, they seemed very glad to find one another again; and so at last the play ended by the falling of the curtain.

I wish the manager would use a drop scene at the close of the acts: we might then always ascertain the termination of the piece by the *green* curtain. On this occasion I was indebted to the polite bows of the actors for this pleasing information. I cannot say that I was entirely satisfied with the play, but I promised myself ample entertainment in the afterpiece, which was called *The Tripolitan Prize*. Now, thought I, we shall have some *sport* for our money; we shall no doubt see a few of these Tripolitan scoundrels spitted like turkeys for our amusement. Well, sir, the curtain rose—the trees waved in front of the stage, and the sea rolled in the rear. All things looked very pleasant and smiling. Presently I heard a bustling behind the scenes—here, thought I, comes a fierce band of Tripolitans, with whiskers as long as my arm. No such thing—they were only a party of village masters and misses, taking a walk for exercise, and very pretty behaved young gentlefolks they were, I assure you; but it was cruel in the manager to dress them in *buckram*, as it deprived them entirely of the use of their limbs. They arranged themselves very orderly on each side of the stage, and sang something, doubtless very affecting, for they all looked pitiful enough. By and by came up a most tremendous storm; the lightning flashed, the thunder roared, the rain descended in torrents: however, our pretty rustics stood gaping quietly at one another till they must have been wet to the skin. I was surprised at their torpidity, till I found they were each one afraid to move first, through fear of being laughed at for their awkwardness. How they got off I do not recollect, but I advise the manager, in a similar case, to furnish every one with a *trap-door*, through which to make his exit. Yet this would deprive the audience of much amusement, for nothing can be more laughable than to see a body of guards with their spears, or courtiers with their long robes, *get* across the stage at our theatre.

Scene passed after scene. In vain I strained my eyes to catch a glimpse of a Mahometan phiz. I once heard a great bellowing behind the scenes, and expected to see a strapping Mussulman come bouncing in ; but was miserably disappointed, on distinguishing his voice, to find out by his *swearing* that he was only a *Christian*. In he came—an American navy officer—worsted stockings—olive velvet small-clothes—scarlet vest—pea-jacket, and *gold laced hat*—dressed quite *in character*. I soon found out by his talk that he was an American prize-master : that, returning through the *Mediterranean* with his Tripolitan prize, he was driven by a storm on the *coast of England* ! The honest gentleman seemed from his actions to be rather intoxicated ; which I could account for in no other way than his having drank a great deal of salt water as he swam ashore.

Several following scenes were taken up with hallooing and huzza-ing between the captain, his crew, and the gallery ; with several amusing tricks of the captain and his son, a very funny, mischievous little fellow. Then came the cream of the joke : the captain wanted to put to sea, and the young fellow, who had fallen deperately in love, to stay ashore. Here was a contest between love and honour—such piping of eyes, such blowing of noses, such slapping of pocket-holes ! But *Old Junk* was inflexible ! What ! an American tar desert his duty ! (three cheers from the gallery) impossible ! American tars for ever ! true blue will never stain !! &c. &c. (a continual thundering among the gods).

Here was a scene of distress ; here was pathos. The author seemed as much puzzled how to dispose of the young tar as *Old Junk* was. It would not do to leave an American seaman on foreign ground ; nor would it do to separate him from his mistress.

Scene the last opened ; it seems that another Tripolitan cruiser had borne down on the prize as she lay about a mile off shore. How a Barbary corsair had got in this part of the world ; whether she had been driven there by the same storm, or whether she was cruising about to pick up a few English first-rates, I could not learn. However, here she was ; again were we conducted to the seashore, where we found all the village gentry, in their buckram suits, ready assembled to be entertained with the rare show of an American and Tripolitan, engaged yard-arm and yard-arm. The battle was conducted with proper decency and decorum, and the Tripolitan very politely gave in ; as it would be indecent to conquer in the face of an American audience. After the engagement, the crew came ashore, joined with the captain and gallery in a few more huzzas, and the curtain

fell. How Old Junk, his son, and his son's sweetheart, settled it, I could not discover.

I was somewhat puzzled to understand the meaning and necessity of this engagement between the ships, till an honest old countryman at my elbow said he supposed *this* was the *Battle of Hesham*, as he recollected no fighting in the first piece. With this explanation I was perfectly satisfied.

My remarks upon the audience I shall postpone to another opportunity.

JONATHAN OLDSTYLE.

We give part of the next communication.

I observed that every part of the house has its different department. The good folks of the gallery have all the trouble of ordering the music (their directions, however, are not more frequently followed than they deserve). The mode by which they issue their mandates is stamping, hissing, roaring, whistling, and, when the musicians are refractory, groaning in cadence. They also have the privilege of demanding a *bow* from *John* (by which name they designate every servant at the theatre who enters to move a table or snuff a candle); and of detecting those cunning dogs who peep from behind the curtain.

"My friend," said I, to the countryman, who complained of candle-grease falling on his coat, "we must put up with a few trifling inconveniences when in the pursuit of pleasure." "True," said he: "but I think I pay pretty dear for it:—first to give six shillings at the door, and then to have my head battered with rotten apples, and my coat spoiled by candle-grease: by-and-by I shall have my other clothes dirtied by sitting down, as I perceive every body mounted on the benches. I wonder if they could not see as well if they were all to stand upon the floor."

Here I could no longer defend our customs, for I could scarcely breathe while thus surrounded by a host of strapping fellows standing with their dirty boots on the seats of the benches. The little Frenchman who thus found a temporary shelter from the missive compliments of his gallery friends, was the only person benefited. At last the bell again rung, and the cry of "down, down!—hats off!" was the signal for the commencement of the play.

If, Mr. Editor, the garrulity of an old fellow is not tiresome, and you choose to give this *view of a New-York Theatre* a place in your paper, you may, perhaps, hear further from your friend,

JONATHAN OLDSTYLE.

In his next, he says—

I had chosen a seat in the pit, as least subject to annoyance from a habit of talking loud that has lately crept into our theatres, and which particularly prevails in the boxes. In old times, people went to the theatre for the sake of the play and acting; but I now find it begins to answer the purpose of a coffee-house, or fashionable lounge, where many indulge in loud conversation, without any regard to the pain it inflicts on their more attentive neighbours. As this conversation is generally of the most trifling kind, it seldom repays the latter for the inconvenience they suffer of not hearing one-half of the play.

I found, however, that I had not much bettered my situation; but that every part of the house has its share of evils. Besides those I had already suffered, I was yet to undergo a new kind of torment. I had got in the neighbourhood of a very obliging personage, who had seen the play before, and was kindly anticipating every scene, and informing those about him what was to take place; to prevent, I suppose, any *disagreeable* surprise to which they would otherwise have been liable. Had there been any thing of a plot in the play, this might have been a serious inconvenience; but, as the piece was entirely *innocent* of every thing of the kind, it was not of so much importance. As I generally contrive to extract amusement from every incident that happens, I now entertained myself with remarks on the self-important air with which he delivered his information, and the distressed and impatient looks of his unwilling auditors.

My country neighbour was exceedingly delighted with the performance, though he did not half the time understand what was going forward. He sat staring with open mouth at the portly gentleman, as he strode across the stage, and in a furious rage drew his sword on the *white lion*. "By George, but that's a brave fellow," said he, when the act was over; "that's what you call first-rate acting, I suppose."

"Yes," said I, "it is what the critics of the present day admire, but it is not altogether what I like; you should have seen an actor of the *old school* do this part; he would have given it to some purpose; you'd have had such ranting and roaring, and stamping and storming; to be sure this honest man gives us a *bounce* now and then in the true old style, but in the main he seems to prefer walking on plain ground to strutting on the *stilts* used by the tragic heroes of my day."

This is the chief of what passed between me and my companion during the play and entertainment, except an observation of his, that it would be well if the manager were to *drill* his nobility and gentry now and then, to enable them to go through their evolutions with more grace and spirit.

"But what is your opinion of the house?" said I: "don't you think it a very substantial, *solid-looking* building, both inside and out? Observe what a fine effect the dark colouring of the wall has upon the white faces of the audience, which glare like the stars in a dark night. And then what can be more pretty than the paintings on the front of the boxes; those little masters and misses sucking their thumbs and making mouths at the audience!"

"Very fine, upon my word—and what, pray, is the use of that chandelier, as you call it, that is hung among the clouds, and has showered down its favours on my coat?"

"Oh, that is to illumine the heavens, and to set off to advantage the little periwigg'd cupids, tumbling head-over-heels, with which the painter has decorated the *dome*. You see we have no need of the chandelier below, as here the house is *perfectly well* illuminated; but I think it would have been a great saving of candle-light if the manager had ordered the painter, among his other pretty designs, to paint a moon up there, or if he was to hang up that sun with whose *intense light* our eyes were greatly annoyed in the beginning of the afterpiece."

"But don't you think, after all, there is rather a—sort of a—kind of *heavyishness* about the house? don't you think it has a little of an *under-groundish* appearance?"

To this I could make no answer. I must confess I have thought myself the house had a *dungeon-like* look; so I proposed to him to make our exit, as the candles were putting out, and we should be left in the dark. Accordingly, groping our way through the dismal *subterraneous* passage that leads from the pit, and passing through the ragged bridewell-looking antechamber, we once more emerged into the purer air of the Park, when, bidding my honest countryman good-night, I repaired home, considerably pleased with the entertainments of the evening.

Thus, Mr. Editor, have I given you an account of the chief incidents that occurred in my visit to the theatre. I have shown you a few of its accommodations and its imperfections. Those who visit it more frequently may be able to give you a better statement.

I shall conclude with a few words of advice for the benefit of every department of it.

I would recommend,

To the actors—less etiquette—less fustian—less buckram.

To the orchestra—new music, and more of it.

To the pit—patience, clean benches, and umbrellas.

To the boxes—less affectation—less noise—less coxcombs.

To the gallery—less grog, and better constables; and

To the whole house—inside and out—a total reformation. And so much for the theatre.

JONATHAN OLDSTYLE.

To Jonathan Oldstyle, Gent.

MY DEAR FRIEND—I perceive, by the late papers, you have been entertaining the town with remarks on the theatre. As you do not seem from your writings to be much of an adept in the Thespian arcana, permit me to give you a few hints for your information.

The theatre, you observe, begins to answer all the purposes of a coffee-house. Here you are right: it is the polite lounge, where the idle and curious resort to pick up the news of the fashionable world; to meet their acquaintances, and to show themselves off to advantage. As to the dull souls who go for the sake of the play, why, if their attention is interrupted by the conversation of their neighbours, they must bear it with patience—it is a custom authorized by fashion. Persons who go for the purpose of chatting with their friends are not to be deprived of their amusement: *they have paid their dollar*, and have a right to entertain themselves as well as they can. As to those who are annoyed by their talking, why they need not listen to it—*let them mind their own business*.

I think you complain of the deficiency of the music, and say that we want a greater variety and more of it. But you must know that though this might have been a grievance in old times, when people attended to the musicians, it is a thing of but little moment at present. Our orchestra is kept principally for form sake. There is such a continual noise and bustle between the acts that it is difficult to hear a note; and, if the musicians were to get up a new piece of the finest melody, so nicely tuned are the ears of their auditors, that I doubt whether nine hearers out of ten would not complain, on leaving the house, that they had been *bored* with the same old pieces they have heard these two or three years back. Indeed, many who go to the theatre carry their own music with them; and we are so often delighted with the crying of children by way of glee, and such coughing and sneezing from various parts of the house, by way of chorus—not

to mention the regale of a sweet symphony from a sweep or two in the gallery—and occasionally a full piece, in which nasal, vocal, *whistling*, and *thumping* powers are admirably exerted and blended, that what want we of an orchestra?

In your remarks on the actors, my dear friend, let me beg of you to be cautious. I would not for the world that you should *degenerate* into a critic. The critics, my dear Jonathan, are the very pests of society: they rob the actor of his reputation, the public of their amusement: they open the eyes of their readers to a full perception of the faults of our performers; they reduce our feelings to a state of miserable refinement, and destroy entirely all the enjoyments in which our coarser sensations delighted. I can remember the time when I could hardly keep my seat through laughing at the wretched buffoonery, the Merry Andrew tricks, and the unnatural grimaces played off by one of our theatric Jack Puddings! when I was struck with awful admiration at the roaring and ranting of a buskined hero; and hung with rapture on every word, while he was "tearing a passion to tatters—to very rags!" I remember the time when he, who could make the queerest mouth, roll his eyes and twist his body with the most hideous distortions, was surest to please. Alas! how changed the times, or rather how changed the tastes! I can now sit with the gravest countenance, and look without a smile on all such *mimicry*—their skipping, their squinting, their shrugging, their snuffling, delight not me; and as to their ranting and roaring,

I'd rather hear a brazen candlestick turned,
Or a dry wheel grate on the axletree,

than any such fustian efforts to obtain a shallow gallery applause.

Now, though I confess these critics have reformed the manners of the actors, as well as the tastes of the audience, so that these absurdities are almost banished from the New-York stage, yet I think they have employed a most unwarrantable liberty.

A critic, my dear sir, has no more right to expose the faults of an actor than he has to detect the deception of a juggler, or the impositions of a quack. All trades must live; and as long as the public are satisfied to admire the tricks of the juggler, to swallow the drugs of the quack, or to applaud the fustian of the actor, whoever attempts to undeceive them does but curtail the pleasures of the latter, and deprive the former of their bread.

Odsbud! hath not an actor eyes, and shall he not *wink*? hath not an actor teeth, and shall he not *grin*? feet, and shall he not *stamp*? lungs, and shall he not *roar*? breast, and shall he not *slap* it? hair,

and shall he not *club* it? Is he not fed with plaudits from the gods? delighted with thumpings from the groundlings? annoyed by hisses from the boxes?

If you censure his follies, does he not complain? if you take away his bread, will he not starve? if you starve him, will he not die? and if you kill him, will not his wife and seven small infants, six at her back and one at her breast, rise up and cry vengeance against you? Ponder these things seriously, my friend Oldstyle, and you will agree with me that, as the actor is the most meritorious and faultless, so is the critic the most cruel and sanguinary character in the world, as I will show you more fully in my next.

Your loving friend,

ANDREW QUOZ.

We will conclude with Mr. Oldstyle's account of *The Wheel of Truth*, which is the most cruel cut of all upon his favourite, the portly gentleman, who performed Harlequin, or the Merry Andrew.

We found the play already commenced. I was particularly delighted with the appearance and manners of one of the female performers. What ease, what grace, what elegance of deportment! This is not acting, Cousin Jack, said I; this is reality!

After the play, this lady again came forward, and delivered a ludicrous epilogue. I was extremely sorry to find her step so far out of that graceful line of character in which she is calculated to shine, and I perceived by the countenances around me that the sentiment was universal.

"Ah," said I, "how much she forgets what is due to her dignity! That charming countenance was never made to be so unworthily distorted, nor that graceful person and carriage to represent the awkward movements of hobbling decrepitude. Take this word of advice, fair lady, from an old man and a *friend*:—Never, if you wish to retain that character for elegance you so deservedly possess, never degrade yourself by assuming the part of a mimic."

The curtain rose for the afterpiece. Out skipped a *jolly Merry Andrew*. Aha! said I, here is the *Jack Pudding*. I see he has forgot his broomstick and gridiron; he'll compensate for these wants, I suppose, by his wit and humour. But where is his master, the quack? He'll be here presently, said Jack Stylish; he's a queer old codger: his name's Puffaway; here's to be a rare roasting-match, and this quizzical-looking fellow turns the spit. The Merry Andrew now began to deal out his speeches with great rapidity; but, on a sudden,

pulling off a black hood that covered his face, who should I recognise but my old acquaintance, the *portly gentleman* !

I started back with astonishment. *Sic transit gloria mundi* ! exclaimed I, with a melancholy shake of the head. Here's a *dreary* but true picture of the vicissitudes of life : one night paraded in regal robes, surrounded with a *splendid train* of nobility, the next degraded to a poor *Jack Pudding*, and without even a gridiron to help himself ! What think you of this, my friend Quoz ? said I ; think you an actor has any right to sport with the *feelings* of his audience, by presenting them with such *distressing* contrasts ? Quoz, who is of the melting mood, shook his head ruefully, and said nothing. I, however, saw the tear of *sympathy* tremble in his eye, and honoured him for his *sensibility*.

The *Merry Andrew* went on with his part, and my pity increased as he progressed ; when, all of a sudden, he exclaimed, " And as to *Oldstyle*, I wish him to Old Nick !" My blood mounted into my cheeks at this insolent mention of my name. " And what think you of *this*, friend Quoz ?" exclaimed I, vehemently ; " I presume this is one of your " rights of actors !" I suppose we are now to have the stage a vehicle for lampoons and slanders : on which our fellow-citizens are to be caricatured by the clumsy hand of every dauber who can hold a brush ! Let me tell you, Mr. Andrew Quoz, I have known the time when such insolence would have been hooted from the stage."

After some persuasion, I resumed my seat, and attempted to listen patiently to the rest of the afterpiece ; but I was so disgusted with the *Merry Andrew*, that, in spite of all his skipping and jumping, and turning on his heel, I could not yield him a smile.

Among the other *original* characters of the *dramatis personæ*, we were presented with an ancient maiden, and entertained with jests and remarks from the buffoon and his associates, containing equal *wit* and *novelty*. But, jesting apart, I think these attempts to injure female happiness at once cruel and unmanly. I have ever been an enthusiast in my attachment to the fair sex ; I have ever thought them possessed of the strongest claims on our admiration, our tenderness, and our protection. But when to these are added still stronger claims—when we see them aged and infirm, solitary and neglected, without a partner to support them down the descent of life—cold indeed must be that heart, and unmanly that spirit, that can point the shafts of ridicule at their defenceless bosoms—that can poison the few drops of comfort Heaven has poured into their cup.

The form of my sister Dorothy presented itself to my imagination ; her hair silvered by time, but her face unwrinkled by sorrow or


care. She "hath borne her faculties so meekly" that age has marked traces on her forehead. Amiable sister of my heart! cried I, who hast jogged with me through so many years of existence, is this to be the recompense of all thy virtues! art thou, who never, in thought or deed, injured the feelings of another, to have thy own massacred by the jeering insults of those to whom thou shouldst look for honour and protection?

Away with such despicable trumpery—such shallow, worn-out attempts to obtain applause from the unfeeling! I'll no more of it. Come along, friend Quoz: if we stay much longer, I suppose we shall find our courts of justice insulted, and attempts to ridicule the characters of private persons. Jack Stylish entreated me to stay, and see the addition the manager had made to his live stock, of an ass, a goose, and a monkey. Not I, said I; I'll see no more. I accordingly hobbled off with my friend Mr. Andrew Quoz, Jack declaring he would stay behind and see the end of the joke. On our way home I asked friend Quoz how he could justify such clumsy attempts at personal satire. He seemed, however, rather reserved in his answers, and informed me he would write his sentiments on the subject.

The next morning Jack Stylish related to me the conclusion of the piece: how several actors went into a wheel, one after another, and, after a little grinding, were converted into asses, geese, and monkeys, except the *Merry Andrew*, who was found such a *tough jockey* that the wheel could not digest him, so he came out as much a Jack Pudding as ever.

JONATHAN OLDSTYLE.

A letter received from the manager about this time is of a character so different from the general tenor of this chapter, that we will reserve it for another, in which threats, and quarrels, and ill-will, shall have no part.



CHAPTER XXVII.

Letter from John Murray, jun., to William Dunlap, and the answer.

2d mo. 15th, 1803.

IMPRESSED with sentiments of friendship, and influenced, I trust, from motives which are the offspring of a desire to promote the welfare of individuals, and the good of the community at large, I am induced to address thee on a subject in which I conceive thy happiness is not a little interested, as well as that of many others who may be more or less affected by thy conduct and example. Since I waited on thee in the case of a young man who had imprudently exposed himself, I have frequently been led to take a view of the pernicious effects resulting from theatrical exhibitions, and to lament that a person of thy understanding and sensibility should ever have been prevailed upon to become an active agent in promoting any kind of amusements which are calculated to weaken the moral principle and alienate the mind from the precepts and practices of Christian religion. I wish not to enlarge much on the subject, but apprehending it was my religious duty to impart a few thoughts to thee relative thereto, I have therefore taken the liberty to do it in this way; with a request that thou would accept a book, entitled, *The Power of Religion on the Mind*, as also a pamphlet containing the sentiments of some pious characters touching the evil tendency of stage-plays, &c. These I submit to thy perusal and serious consideration, and, with an unfeigned solicitude for thy present and future welfare,

I subscribe myself, thy sincere friend,

JOHN MURRAY, Jun.

Mr. Murray, the brother of Lindley Murray, was not at this time a young man; the jun. was

adopted to distinguish him from the father of Mr. John R. Murray.

ANSWER.

February the 17th, 1803.

DEAR SIR,

Your kind and benevolent letter, and the books accompanying it, were put into my hands yesterday. You have given me a pleasure which does not often fall to my lot. In the first place I am flattered not only by your selecting me as an object worthy of the exertion of your benevolence, but that you should so liberally appreciate my understanding as to believe me capable of listening with profit to the voice which cries, "Your ways are the ways of wickedness, and lead to destruction." Secondly, I am pleased to see in you a proof that there are men among us who, from purely disinterested motives, take part in that which concerns their neighbour's welfare, and generously expose themselves to the risk of his displeasure from a wish to confer on him a benefit.

Although I am thus gratified by your attention to me, you must not conclude that I am insensible to the mortifying consideration that my conduct meets with the entire disapprobation of an enlightened and honest man. No thinking man ought to (nay, I may say no thinking man can) be so fortified in his opinions of the truth of those deductions which are the result of his own reasoning on an important subject, but that he is rejoiced to find his conclusions sanctioned and supported by others; and must always pause, with a sensation of pain, when a wise or good man differs from him in opinion.

I accept with pleasure the books, and shall keep them as a memorial of your friendship. I read the pamphlet yesterday, and looked over the other compilation. Collier, Rousseau, and Witherspoon, have written against the stage with more force than any other authors whom I have read, and have brought forward all the arguments that are to be found in Mr. Lindley Murray's pamphlet, with others not there noticed. I would wish you to do me the justice to believe that subjects so momentous as those you recommend have not been passed over lightly in my previous studies; and that I did not become an author of plays and a director of their exhibition, before I had with my best ability examined the subject, and heard or read all the arguments against the drama which were within my reach. My

decision, notwithstanding, was, and still is, in favour of theatrical establishments *in all great cities* ; from a full conviction that, with all the ills which may be imputed to them, the balance of good must be carried to their credit.

Far be it from me to suppose myself above error, or that my reason is so powerful as to be in no danger from the seductions of passion and selfishness, or the biases of early education and prejudices ; and whenever I shall be convinced that I am acting upon erroneous principles, I will undoubtedly change my conduct. The path I am now in is not the path of pleasure ; and *but* from the consciousness of its being my duty to continue in it, I should certainly seek another. You must suppose me in error ; and as the truth is always desirable, and in this instance concerns the welfare of many, I should be glad to submit to you the process of my reasoning on this subject, and by so doing give you an opportunity of detecting the mistakes I may have committed. With your permission, I will sometime hence address you again on this subject. At present permit me to assure you of the grateful sense I entertain of the propriety of your conduct towards me, and to subscribe myself your sincere friend.

It is probable that at the present time the writer of the last letter would not have treated the subject exactly as above. A theatre well conducted, and under the charge of the government, is good in any place.

To avoid a repetition of ideas, and to be as brief as possible, instead of the subsequent letters to Mr. Murray, we will give a few extracts. As he made no reply the subject was dropped. In the second letter are these remarks on Mr. Lindley Murray's pamphlet, which accompanied his brother's letter.

Mr. Lindley Murray introduces his theme with the language of a gentleman and a philosopher ; and, unlike those dogmatical sectaries who, presuming upon the infallibility of their own opinions, stigmatize with the epithets trifling, dangerous, hurtful, vicious, criminal,

intolerable, and profane, those opinions which differ from their own, he, with due respect to his fellow men, invites to free inquiry ; advances his opinion against dramatic exhibitions, and gives as a support to that opinion the words of certain well known characters, whose names are supposed to add weight to his assertions.

To oppose to the names, Mr. Murray brings forward, in formidable array, an equal number—I forbear to say a greater—of the most enlightened men and the most exemplary, might be mentioned, who have assisted at stage representations. The first objection I make to Mr. Murray's pamphlet is the phrase on his title-page—*Dramatic entertainments and other VAIN amusements*. As Mr. Murray invites to "free inquiry," and "candid opinions *decently* advanced," it appears to me to be improper to brand the subject with a degrading epithet before an attempt is made to discuss it.

On page eight I find these words supported by the name of the Prince of Conti:—"It is a jest to fancy that a man need to pass three hours in filling his mind with follies at a play." This is the first mention made of plays after the introduction. The wise Prince of Conti tells us that one has no need of filling the mind with follies—that it is a jest to think it needful. Is it only a jest? Indeed I think that it is lamentable that any human being should fill his mind with follies at any time or in any place. But we are not, on the authority of his royal highness, to take it for granted that by attention to a play the mind is filled with follies. By attention to a fable or parable, whether delivered from the stage or the press, whether in narrative or dialogue, by one person or many, the mind may imbibe the most useful and important truths.

From the same author Mr. Murray quotes the following words: "Now, among the pleasures of the world, which extinguish the love of God, it may be said that plays and romances hold the first rank, because there is nothing more imposed to truth."

No play or romance that was ever written contains a greater falsehood than the above. Do the soul-debasing pleasures which engross the minds of the sensual extinguish the love of God less than reading or hearing the fables of the poet? The Prince of Conti has said so, and Lindley Murray has sanctioned the assertion. •

That "there is nothing more opposed to truth" than plays and romances, is an assertion utterly void of just foundation. Plays, poems, and romances, derive their value and popularity from the true delineation of nature, added to the just sentiments introduced, and the

moral inculcated by the fable. It surely cannot be meant that they are opposed to truth, because they are fictions, fables, or parables. Mr. Murray knows full well that by such fictions, fables, or parables, men are induced to listen to the voice of the teacher, and remembers with delight and reverence Jotham's beautiful fable of the trees, Nathan's fable of the poor man and the lamb, the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the sower, the ten virgins, the prodigal son, and many others, which are so instructively interspersed through the prophetic and other scriptures. Now, a poem, a play, a novel, or a romance, is a fable, or parable, of more or less length—the play written in a form to be recited by one or more persons—otherwise in nothing differing.

The general assertions of ignorant or misinformed writers or declaimers against stage-plays, as "that nothing is represented in them but gallantries, or extraordinary adventures, and discourses far distant from serious life,"—"that plays are full of wicked maxims,"—"that they notoriously minister to vice and immorality,"—"that by their lewdness they teach vice," are so *notoriously* untrue, and such gross libels upon the thousands of good men who have attended to their representation and encouraged their authors and those who studied to give them force and effect by recitation and action, that they are unworthy of notice at this time and in this state of society.

That many plays and other books may be found immoral in their tendency, and disgusting from their vulgar and obscene expressions, is too true. That some of the very many plays represented on the stage are objectionable, is likewise true; but that entertainments such as are described by Archbishop Tillotson and others are the favourites of the present time, is utterly untrue, and the assertion an indecent outrage upon those to whom it is addressed.

The stage, as well as the press, brings before the public a great variety of literary effusions of unequal merit. But the stage can never produce works so vile as issue from the press; for men will endure to read that which, if spoken from the stage, no audience would tolerate for a moment. Shall we therefore abolish the press?

There are many who cannot, and still more who will not, read, but will receive the lessons of wisdom when impressed by the exertions of others. Evil maxims in plays are hurtful, but good maxims

must be beneficial; and none will deny that there are plays whose whole and sole tendency is to good. The time may come when all shall be such.

With these extracts we will conclude this chapter, and proceed to chronicle events in our eventful history.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Boston Theatre and Mr. Powell—Miss F. Hodgkinson—Alphonso—Mrs. Gannett—Mrs. Wignell—Mrs. Hodgkinson—Miss Brett—Messrs. Claude and Clarke—Mr. Hodgkinson's Bankruptcy as a Merchant, &c. in Philadelphia—Death of Mrs. Hodgkinson and Miss Brett, 1803.

MR. S. POWELL was this winter (1802-3) the manager of the Boston theatre, and Mrs. Powell the principal ornament of it. Mr. Powell had the use of the plays written by the New-York manager at this time, always remunerating him honourably.

When *The Voice of Nature* was brought out, Miss F. Hodgkinson was introduced to the public. She was the oldest child then living of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, and a beautiful girl. She has since proved an amiable and worthy woman.

One of the first effects of Mr. Cooper's departure was, that Mr. Fennell, who had been relieved and released by the aid of the manager, increased his demands, and threatened to go to Philadelphia. He however remained through the season.

Lewis's tragedy of *Alphonso* was brought out and applauded; but no attention was paid to the theatre at this time, the receipts not being generally more than half the expenses.

Col. Wm. Smith recommended Deborah Gannett,

and wished that she should have an opportunity of delivering an oration from the stage, she having served three years as a soldier in the war of the revolution. It was an ill-judged exhibition, and failed accordingly.

On the 16th of March, 1803, Holcroft's melo-drame *A Tale of Mystery* was performed in America. This was the first play of the kind seen in the New World ; indeed, this kind of mixed drama was a novelty even in Europe. It was received with pleasure amounting to delight. The characters were thus played :—Bonamo, Tyler ; Romaldi, Hodgkinson ; Francisco, Fennell ; Stephano, Martin ; Montano, Johnson ; Michelli, Jefferson ; Piero, Hogg ; First gardener, Prigmore. Selina, Mrs. Johnson ; Fiamella, Mrs. Hogg. Miss Hodgkinson danced "*a shantruse*."

On the 30th of March, the manager's play of *The Blind Boy*, with a dialogue epilogue, was performed to a thin audience—parts much applauded. Its second night was better attended. It was never popular.

At this time Mr. Cooper was playing Hamlet, Macbeth, and Richard, successfully in London.

Holcroft's comedy of *Hear both Sides* was received from James Brown, the friend of the manager of the New-York theatre, and brother of his friend, C. B. Brown.

A play called *The Tournament* was brought out with expensive scenery and decorations, but without salutary effect upon the treasury.

In May, 1803, Mrs. Wignell gave notice that, as principal, she had engaged the theatre of Philadelphia, and that the business would be as usual carried on by Wignell and Reinagle. A letter had been addressed to her, on hearing a report that she intended leaving America, to which the following is the answer:—

Baltimore, May 30th, 1803.

W. DUNLAP, Esq.

Dear Sir,—Before this time you must have seen by the papers that I have bound myself a slave for four years. Doubts and fears for the consequences of such an arduous undertaking prevented my answering your kind and friendly letter before. As I did not make up my mind to the task until the last moment, and as circumstances would have obliged me to remain in this country at least to the end of the next winter, it is more than probable I should have accepted your proposal, and be assured this is the only reason for my apparent neglect. Believe me, with all respect,

Your obedient and obliged friend,

ANNE WIGNELL.

Mrs. Hodgkinson had been for some time in declining health, and was in June, 1803, evidently too ill to exert herself in her profession. On Wednesday the 15th, she appeared so unwell when playing "Letitia Hardy," that the manager spoke to her husband on the subject, hoping he would withdraw her. He said she could play "any speaking part;" that "those who took benefits must not put her in the bills for too much;" that "she could not sing, but could do any speaking part." In consequence, she was announced for Mrs. Haller, in *The Stranger*, for Monday the 26th. She performed the part, looking so as to make the writer's heart ache. Near the conclusion of the play she

spoke to Mr. Ciceri, desiring him to give notice that "she could play no more." She spoke so as to give him the idea that she thought she had been compelled to play ; and he assured her that to his knowledge the manager had long been averse to her coming before the public, and grieved to see the pain she suffered. She told him that "her physician had that evening told her, that if she performed any longer she could not live, but might recover by ease, care, and rest ;" that "she had asked his opinion respecting Miss Brett's situation, and he told her that she could not live." They both died a very short time afterwards ; the one in the prime of life, the other in age still a girl.

Mrs. Hodgkinson was written to thus :

Mr. Ciceri delivered your message to me yesterday. As I have long seen the danger you incurred and the injury you sustained from playing, and have sincerely wished that you would retire to that repose which you so evidently require, I was gratified to hear your determination, and hope that you will soon experience the salutary effects of it.

On the rumour that Mrs. Wignell was going to England, it was supposed that Mr. Hodgkinson would obtain the Philadelphia theatre, and Mr. Wood prepared to shift his quarters to New-York. On the arrangement already mentioned, Mr. Jefferson engaged himself for Philadelphia, where he and his wife remained in that permanent and highly respectable manner which seems to have been peculiarly the lot of the performers of that company. Mr. Wood went to England as Mrs.

Wignell's agent. Mr. Harwood was subsequently engaged for New-York, to supply the place of Mr. Jefferson.

As the names of Messrs. Claude and Clarke are well known in theatrical story, their first appearance, not on the stage, but in a manager's office, shall be related. On the 23d of June, 1803, two young men, well dressed, called and expressed a wish to go on the stage. They were told that the theatre would be closed in a few days, and no opportunity offered. They expressed their disappointment, and the younger seemed chagrined at the idea of returning home. They said they had come from Maryland, and begged to be heard recite. They were gratified, and their defects pointed out, and advice very freely given not to think of going on the stage, but to return home. In short, every thing was said to discourage them from their pursuit. In the evening a black man brought the following :

" Sir, — Having hitherto moved in a sphere of life respectable and independent, the idea of soliciting a favour, from a gentleman to whom I am a perfect stranger, fills my bosom with the most exquisite pain. But there is no alternative. Necessity commands it, and my heart, however reluctant, must obey its dictates. When, sir, I left my native residence, it was under the firmest conviction that I should obtain a situation in the theatre, which would at least furnish me with the means of returning to Maryland, should I become dissatisfied. Disappointed in my expectations, my situation has become truly distressing. A perfect stranger in New-York, without a shilling in my pocket, more than will pay my bill in the house I live, and for a seat in the stage to Philadelphia. To you, sir, under these circumstances, I have taken the liberty to apply for assistance. I flattered myself with an idea that by the disposal of a

watch I have, I might have got to Baltimore, where I am known ; but in this I have also been disappointed, not being able to find a purchaser. Should you think proper to take this for whatever you may advance, I will with pleasure send it to you ; or, if you can place confidence in the honour of a distressed stranger, I will remit to you upon my return to Maryland. I am, with every sentiment of respect,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN CLAUDE.

The black was asked where the gentleman was who sent that letter. "Here, at the corner of the street,"—the corner of Nassau and Beekman. "Ask him to step here." It proved to be the taller and handsomer of the two. He was taken by the hand, and being led into the office, burst into tears. On a chair being presented, he seated himself and sobbed aloud. On being assured that he should have the assistance he needed, he could not reply intelligibly. "Is your companion in the same destitute situation?" "I believe he is." "Is it the determination of both to return home?" "Yes." "Will twenty dollars carry you to your friends?" "I believe it will be quite sufficient." It was given with assurances of perfect confidence. "I do not wish to pry into your affairs ; as soon as I saw you I feared what I now find true, that this expedition is the fruit of some sudden and unadvised impulse." "Madness, madness!" "I cannot be sorry for your distress, if its effect will be to restore you to your friends, and turn your thoughts from any pursuits not sanctioned by them." "I have friends, sir—I have read law—I—~~He would not proceed.~~" "If you find to-mor-

row the sum I have given you is not sufficient for you and your companion, call on me for more." He could not speak, pressed my hand, and departed. He did not call again.

Both these young men are dead. I am sorry to say that it is probable this first step was never retrieved. They both became performers without distinguished excellence. Claude married Miss Hogg, and left her a young widow. Clarke, after Hodgkinson's death, married Miss Harding, who at the time went under the name of Mrs. Marshall.

This transaction will serve to give an idea of many similar adventures of youth and folly, some doubtless terminating even worse.

The time had now arrived for forming the company for the succeeding winter, and it was necessary to know the determination of the most efficient actor in the country. The state of Mrs. Hodgkinson's health was a source of embarrassment. Messrs. P. Irving, John Wells, and William Coleman, concurred in advising and dictating the words of the following letter to Mr. Hodgkinson.

Our engagements having expired some time back, you may perhaps be at a loss to account for my silence in respect to a renewal of them. Give me leave to assure you, sir, that it has not proceeded from a want of a due sense of the importance of your support to the New-York theatre; yet I could not but hesitate in making you proposals, under the peculiar circumstances in which the theatre is unfortunately placed.

You know as well as myself that the receipts have not been adequate to the payment of the engagements, and that, instead of accumulating property, I am accumulating debt. Thus situated, I

have deferred making any offers for future engagements, and to the applications which have been made to me have only given provisional answers.

Knowing how justly you appreciate your talents, I have felt great reluctance to offer you less advantageous terms for the ensuing season than those you have enjoyed heretofore, especially as my circumstances, as well as those of the theatre generally, put it out of my power to hire your theatrical property as I have for some years done. If it should still be agreeable to you to enter into a negotiation on such terms as I am enabled to offer, I shall be happy in any arrangement which may secure to me your continuance in the New-York theatre.

The last paragraph was written by P. Irving.

Upon a supposition that, in answer to the above, a definitive offer would be called for, it was agreed that 45 dollars should be named as his salary, he finding his own dresses; that it should be stated in consideration of Mrs. Hodgkinson's delicate health, and the impropriety of calling upon her for professional exertions, when it was evident that her restoration depended upon long continued repose, another lady should be engaged for her business; but 20 dollars paid weekly during the engagement, she not being called upon more than once a week, and not even that, if her health should continue inadequate to such exertion.

But the offer was not called for—the following answer concluded the affair.

Sir,—The terms of renewing mine and Mrs. Hodgkinson's engagement with you for another season are the establishment in point of property, business, and salary, as our former one; with the addition of certainty in its extension to — weeks. Your letter is so far from meeting ideas of this nature, that I have only to wish you every success and happiness in other negotiations and with other people.

In consequence of this, the engagement of Mr. Harwood was completed, he being to act as stage-manager, and receiving 35 dollars as performer and 15 as manager.

The manager's play of *The Glory of Columbia her Yeomanry*, written for the 4th of July, was played (1803), and the receipts 1287 dollars. The theatre was kept open the next night, and the receipts 444 dollars, which was still more extraordinary. The money necessary to discharging accounts and salaries, and making requisite advances, was raised by mortgage on landed property in New-Jersey.

This summer was again a season of pestilence, both in New-York and Philadelphia. Mr. Hodgkinson's account had been sent to him, making him debtor 5395 dollars. He returned—*defiance!* and early in September he was declared bankrupt in Philadelphia, as "John Hodgkinson, merchant, dealer, and chapman, Philadelphia (late of New-York), to surrender on the 14th of September, 11th and 21st of October, 1803."

In September, Miss Arabella Brett died. Early in October, a letter was received from William Coleman, dated 27th of September, 1803, "Tyler's Gardens, Tuesday, seven o'clock," from which we must make some extracts, or we should not be faithful to the task we have undertaken. "After considerable knocking, Mrs. Brett partly opened the door, in that kind of manner as if to say no one's at home. Seeing who it was, she beckoned

me in with her hand, and pointed to the parlour. I desired her, in a whisper, not to awaken Mrs. Hodgkinson. She went softly up the stairs, and presently he came down; he called me 'Billy,' and took my hand, to be sure, with much softness and affection, and sighed very deeply! I asked him if Mrs. H. was worse? He said no, he did not think she was, but he would awake her. I desired him not; but he persisted, and went to her room, saying, '*You won't know her.*' She came, rather dragging than walking; but when she inclined her head as she entered the door, though prepared for the sight of a melancholy object, I started. Her face had no sign of muscle about it; her lips skinning to a degree that showed all her front teeth as she breathed; her eyes glassy, and wandering, apparently without the power of distinguishing objects; her whole countenance ghastly to a shocking degree: yet she seemed not alarmed at her situation, but talked of getting rid, somehow, of her cough, and she said she should soon get well." "Mrs. Tyler was there the day after, and she consulted her about the fashion of a new bonnet she wanted, and even spoke of playing again." "About an hour since, Tyler told me *she was no more!* 'Tis a melancholy subject to dwell upon." After mentioning the death of Miss Brett, he continues, "Poor Bell!—nearly her last words were, I wish Mr. Hodgkinson might see me *after I am dead.*"

CHAPTER XXIX.

1803—Albany—New-York Company—John E. Harwood—Parallel between Harwood and Hodgkinson—John Bull—Harwood's Dennis Brulgruddery—Mr. Hogg's Job Thornberry—Buonaparte in England—Mr. Searson—The Theatre of New-York sold at Auction—Conceit can Kill, Conceit can Cure—Lewis of Monte Blanco, or the Transplanted Irishman—Harwood's Military Irishman—Mr. and Mrs. Darley—Mr. Huntington—Mr. Thomas A. Cooper returns from England—Bankruptcy of the Manager of the New-York Theatre.

DURING this summer, the performers of the New-York theatre played at Mount Vernon Gardens for a short time, and afterwards at Albany, with some success.

A letter was addressed to William Henderson, Esq., wishing a weekly sum to be fixed for rent of the theatre, until the chancery suit in which the property was involved should be settled. It is stated that Mrs. Wignell and Mr. Reinagle pay for the Philadelphia theatre and property 2500 dollars per year. Mr. Henderson, in answer, says, "The chancellor as yet has made no decree," and advises to open the house on or before the middle of November.

The Philadelphia company for the winter of 1803-4 consisted of Messrs. Warren, Downie, Jefferson, Twaits, Blissett, Francis, Wood, Cain, Morris, Warrell, Durang, Mestayer, Melbourne, Fox, Hardinge, L'Estrange, and Usher; Mesdames Wignell, Oldmixon, Shaw, Francis, Wood

(late Miss Westray), Solomon, Snowden, Durang, Downie, Morris, and Miss Hunt. This was the first season in which Mr. Jefferson was enrolled as a member of the Philadelphia *corps dramatique*, and he continued a useful and extremely valuable member of that body unto the day of his death, in August, 1832. He died at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, aged fifty-eight.

The theatre of New-York was opened on the 14th of November, 1803, with the comedy of *She Would and She Would Not*, and the farce of *Ways and Means*—Trapanti and Sir David Dunder, Mr. John E. Harwood. The company now consisted of Messrs. Fennell, Hallam, Harwood, Tyler, Johnson, Harper, Martin, Hallam, junior, Hogg, Prigmore, Saunderson, M'Donald, and Shapter; Mesdames Johnson, Melmoth, Hallam, Hogg, and Miss Hogg.

Mr. Harwood was received with well-merited applause, and soon became a favourite, although the remembrance of Mr. Hodgkinson in many parts made it impossible for any performer to follow him with perfect success. John E. Harwood has been mentioned in the catalogue of the splendid company brought out to this country in 1793 for Philadelphia. He was a man endowed by nature with brilliant talents, and had received in every respect the education of a gentleman. His Trapanti, Sir David Dunder, Lenitive, Dennis Brulgruddery, Canton, Gradus, Capt. Ironsides, and a long list of characters, were superior in our

opinion to those of any man yet seen in this country : he was more like John Bannister than any other actor of the English stage. His Falstaff was the best in this country, until Cooke played it, except, and it is a most formidable exception, that it was not sufficiently studied. In truth, self-indulgence was the ruin of Harwood, as of thousands off and on the stage. After his marriage, he had retired from the stage, and kept a bookstore and circulating library: this retirement from a profession in which he was qualified to shine was probably not his own choice. He read his books, and neglected his business. Booksellers should never read ; if they do, they are lost. There are brilliant exceptions ; but then they wrote also: they did not read merely for the gratification of reading, or to *kill time*, but to gain knowledge, and they exerted themselves to impart it. The venerable Matthew Carey is an instance in point. Harwood was a poet, and had in early life published a volume of verses. He was a man of wit, and the favourite of every company ; never obtrusive, and always willing to take a joke or to give one. He was lazy, and became corpulent ; the first disqualified him for all business, and rendered many of his new characters, after he returned to the stage, less perfect than they would have been ; the second spoiled his appearance and action for high or genteel comedy, for a corpulent *Michael Perez* (and he played it well) should not be placed by the side of *Cacofogo*. John E. Harwood, off the stage,

would have shone as a man of fortune, and he had a wife equally fitted to be a man of fortune's wife ; but as unfit for a poor man's wife as he was for a poor man. The consequence was the return to the stage, which brings him again before the reader.

Amusing parallels might be drawn, showing the similarity and dissimilarity between Hodgkinson and Harwood, both possessing great talents, and great physical powers ; both addicted to indulgence ; yet one lazy, and the other not only active, but restless ; one refined, the other coarse ; one retiring, the other forward : but enough has been said to enable the reader to form his own opinion of both. They were two very excellent actors, the one far surpassing the other in versatility and industry.

On the 25th of November, *The Glory of Columbia her Yeomanry* produced again a great receipt : it had been played three times, at an average of near 900 dollars. The author, no doubt, was flattered ; yet perhaps Burk's *Bunker's Hill* had been more attractive and applauded. The applause of the enlightened is gratifying, and ought to be so. Mr. Bulwer has made his *Eugene Aram* express the stirring of his ambition when he heard the plaudits bestowed on a play ; but, when the same audience greeted a tumbler with still louder testimonies of their approbation, the ambition was quickly smothered.

The excellent comedy of *John Bull*, by Colman the younger, was brought out, and was a tempo-

rary support to the theatre. Mr. Harper was certainly a very inadequate representative of Tom Shuffleton; but the part was new, and the audience were satisfied, because they had not seen a better. No fault could have been found with Mrs. Johnson's Mary Thornberry, unless that she was too tall and too elegant for the brazier's daughter—faults easily passed over—and the pathos of the part was perfect. Mrs. Hallam had the same advantage which attended Mr. Harper, with the semblance of youth and the remains of beauty to aid her. Mr. Hallam's Dan was the production of an artist, but without any prominent excellence. Mr. Johnson's Sir Simon Rochdale was truly characteristic, and played with great effect. Mr. John Hogg had now reached that point in his profession which ensured him favour generally; and in some parts, where a certain dry humour was required, he was "just the thing." Before he played Job Thornberry, he was unequal to the part: he could not have conceived or executed it: but, by having it read to him, and by instruction at the rehearsals, he acquired a just possession of the character, and the representation of the brazier stamped him an actor. Mr. Hogg had been gradually acquiring a deserved popularity, first in the line of old men of a secondary character, and then in that of humorists. Besides his Job Thornberry, we remember with peculiar pleasure his John Lump, Humphrey Dobbins, and other comic characters. He was an uneducated

man, with good sense, and praiseworthy modesty ; he was warm-hearted and delicately grateful for favours received. He died on the 14th of February, 1813, at the age of 43 ; he having been born on the 16th of September, 1770, in the parish of Saint Ann, Soho, London. Mrs. Hogg was more than equal to *Mistress* Brulgruddery ; she was in all her old women a most able actress, though she has been far excelled by a much younger woman, the truly admirable Mrs. Wheatley. But Dennis was, in Harwood's hands, one of the richest pieces of comic acting that we have ever witnessed ; nothing overcharged, nothing vulgar, but ripe, and having all the flavour of perfect ripeness in the mellow fruit of an author's genius. Mr. Tyler played Peregrine, a character which, by the intrigue of management, was assigned to George Frederick Cooke at Covent Garden. Mr. Tyler was always perfect in the words of his author, and respectable in the delineation of his characters.

On the 18th of December, Mr. Henderson left a paper with the manager, containing a scheme by which he was to purchase the theatre for 85,000 dollars. The sum was objected to, and a day or two afterwards the sum of 40,000 dollars substituted by him — these words accompanying the same—“ These proposals I make, sir, not because my experience justifies me in offering such terms, for I have long laboured through distress and difficulty, and have yet received no reward, but because I am already so engaged in the business,

that I must sacrifice much if I turn back ; yet that sacrifice I will make rather than add to the above offer." At this time the theatre was advertised for sale at auction.

December 19th, was brought out a farce written by the manager, called *Bonaparte in England*, which brought more applause and less money the third than the first night. Harwood played a German Jew broker, who, being shipwrecked on the coast of England, is taken up as Jerome Bonaparte, for whom the English government were keeping watch, and the honours paid to Shadrach, by an Irish officer, who confounds Jerome with Napoleon, and insists upon treating the broker as First Consul or Emperor, constitute the fun of the farce.

Mr. Searson was tried in two or three characters, and failed. Mr. Claude, the young man before mentioned, having persisted in going on the stage, and having made his debut at Baltimore, now tried George Barnwell with some success, on the 3d of January, 1804.

On the 26th of January, *The Tournament* and *The Wags of Windsor* produced 218 dollars, and such was now the *run of the business*. A splendid show, called *The Chains of the Heart*, was got up and played on the 1st of February, 1804, to 597 dollars. In this piece Miss Dellinger made her first appearance. Its second night yielded 525 ; third night, 265 ; fourth, 197 dollars.

On the 10th of February, the theatre was pur-

chased at auction, by a company of gentlemen, principally or altogether the original subscribers, for 43,000 dollars. The original plan was a subscription of 100 shares, of 375 dollars, making an amount of 37,500 dollars. Twenty more shares were added, and, this also being consumed, money was borrowed to complete it—it never was completed. The cost is stated at 130,500 dollars, which, with interest to the 1st of May, 1803, is stated as amounting to 193,792 dollars. The new proprietors appointed a committee to manage the property, with full powers to lease. The committee was composed of William Henderson, John C. Shaw, Daniel M'Cormick, John M'Vickar, and Joshua Waddington.

On the 21st of February, 1804, the manager brought out a new comedy, called *Conceit can Cure, Conceit can Kill*. It was attended on its first representation, it being known as American, by a very thin audience. It was coldly received, until the two last acts, which, with the epilogue, were warmly applauded. This is the notice of one of the Journals. "The plot contains considerable novelty of incident. It exhibits a picture of mountebank quackery, common in Europe, though little known in this country. The quack, with his attendant apparatus of stage and Jack Pudding, is introduced. The plot turns on the manœuvres of a couple of gentlemen who assume the above disguises; the object of one being to regain a wife; the other to obtain the hand of a

mistress." Those who saw the play had never seen the stage of a mountebank, but the author had witnessed the whole when a boy. Since the revolution, nothing of the kind had been attempted in this country. The second night of the new comedy it was received with still greater applause.

During two weeks of severe cold and snow, the theatre was shut, and opened with another new comedy by the manager, called *Lewis of Monte Blanco*, or *The Transplanted Irishman*. This from its coming so soon after *Conceit can Cure*, *Conceit can Kill*, was not supposed to be the manager's, and was attended by an audience yielding him 523 dollars (double any receipts for some time back), and received with great applause. It was repeatedly played with increasing applause. In this play the author had written the principal characters expressly for Harwood, in consequence of his success in Dennis Brulgruddery, and made an effort to produce an Irishman worthy of the representative of Colman's Dennis. It was, however, a military Irishman, and of course distinct in every respect, as well in manner as incident, from the preceding. The effort was in a degree successful, as far as memory serves; for the author, by lending the manuscript copies (of which several were made), finally lost all traces of the play. Harwood's representation of this character was even satisfactory to its author.

On the 14th of March, the very popular farce of *Raising the Wind* was played for the first time;

Diddler, Harwood ; Sam, Hogg. June 8th, Fennell announced his last appearance on the stage.

After a variety of plans for selling or leasing the theatre, it was, on the 18th of June, again leased to the same director, at one hundred dollars the week, with taxes, and ground-rent for the building then occupied as a scene-house in Theatre-Alley.

After another *great house*, to *The Glory of Columbia, her Yeomanry*, the theatre closed. During the latter part of the season, Signor Bologna was employed to bring out pantomimes and play clown.

Meanwhile the theatre in Philadelphia had been prosperously conducted by Messrs. Warren and Reinagle, to whom Mrs. Wignell transferred the direction, the management being in fact with Mr. Wood. The principal performers were Messrs. Wood, Warren, Francis, Jefferson, Twaits, Mrs. Wignell, and Mrs. Oldmixon. Mr. Twaits and Mr. Jefferson, so different, and both so excellent, gave great strength to comedy and farce. Old Mr. Morris still continued to perform.

The Boston theatre was conducted prosperously by Mr. Powell. Mr. Chalmers was the principal male performer.

Mr. Green directed the theatres in Virginia.

Mr. Placide was the proprietor of the theatrical business of Charleston, Mr. Hodgkinson being the manager, and as actor, the support of it.

Early in August, the lessee of the New-York theatre met Mr. Hodgkinson, and agreed to a settlement of accounts, according to which Hodgkinson was to pay

282 dollars in cash, and give bills payable at Charleston, in November, for 400 dollars. This was at least an acknowledgment that former assertions were false, and that a debt was due, but the creditor never received a cent of the promised sum. Mr. Hodgkinson borrowed copies of manuscript plays for Charleston. He said he did not think of Charleston as a permanent situation, and hinted his desire to return to New-York as an actor.

On the 22nd of September, P. Irving, Esq. wrote thus to the director of the New-York theatre. "I have just received a letter from Mr. Cooper, in which he apologizes for not having written to you, and in some degree accounts for the omission. He proposes a short visit in the course of the ensuing season. Enclosed is an abstract from his letter relative to that business."

Mr. Cooper made several distinct proposals, the first, as being that agreed to, is inserted:—"To sail for New-York about the 10th of February, 1805, and to engage to play in New-York for twelve nights in four weeks. The terms—to divide the profits with the manager, after deducting from the receipts of each night the expenses of the house. To receive a clear benefit on the thirteenth night. His expenses to America, and his return, to be borne by himself."

On the 22nd of October, 1804, the theatre of New-York, having been materially improved, was opened with *The Clandestine Marriage*, and *Village Lawyer*. The company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Hal-

lam, Mr. Harwood, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Tyler, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mr. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Claude (Miss Hogg that was), Mr. and Mrs. Harper, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, Mr. Darby, Mrs. Melmoth, and Messrs. Hallam, jun. Shapter, Robinson, M'Donald, &c.

Mr. Harwood had by this time shown that he was not sufficiently a man of business, and the stage direction was neglected. Mr. Martin was an assistant.

Mr. Darley gave great pleasure as a singer, and in many characters in comedy. His Frenchmen were approved, and his fine manly figure and face gave him a superiority to most who represented the second gentlemen of the drama. In opera he was the first and best the New-York theatre had known. Mrs. Darley, so long a favourite as Miss E. Westray, resumed her station with undiminished charms in that line which she had first filled and shone in beyond any compeer, and was much improved in opera and the loftier branches of her profession.

On the 29th of October, Mr. Huntington tried *Macbeth*. He had made the attempt in London, and failed. He had studied the part well, the stage business and situations were familiar to him, and were regulated at rehearsal according to his wishes. But his failure was complete. He was the first debutant that the writer knows of who was treated harshly by an audience in America, and he was far from deserving it, though far from being equal to the part of *Macbeth*.

We have mentioned the laugh which had nearly

destroyed Mrs. Melmoth's Euphrasia, when she, in 1793, cried, "Strike here! here's blood enough," and drew the attention of the audience from the author of *The Grecian Daughter* to the corpulence of the actress: she got over the laugh—but when, as Lady Macbeth, she said of her husband's behaviour, as represented by Huntington, "The king grows worse and worse," a killing shout was the response of the audience, and little more of the play was heard.

On the 2d of November, a letter was received from Mr. Cooper, apologizing for not having written during his long absence. He states that he had often wished to leave England, but that his mother and other friends were extremely averse to his again coming to America. He had now obtained leave of absence for a short period. He concludes thus: "I shall endeavour to get a new play or two for you, but I cannot promise any thing. As to actors, I have not seen one in England that should arrive in America with the sanction of my recommendation, except only a comedian called Emery." The following answer was returned: "I was at Perth Amboy when Irving communicated your propositions, and immediately wrote to him my agreement to the first, in full confidence of your wish to do justice towards me. I have opened my theatre without a man in tragedy superior to Martin; Fennell being engaged in Connecticut making salt."

Mr. Fennell's *nets* for catching salt will long be remembered by some of the inhabitants of New-London.

The manager brought out a translation from the French by himself, called *The Wife of Two Husbands*, and the English comedies of *The Will*, (in which Mrs. Darley gave great delight,) and *Guilty or Not*, but all to no purpose, as it respected profit.

On the 14th of November, 1804, Mr. Thomas A. Cooper arrived, and his playing for twelve nights was immediately arranged; after which he was to go to Philadelphia, or Boston, or both, and then return to finish the season on salary. An attempt was made to induce Fennell to play with Cooper, but he refused.

As a record, we state the plays and the receipts during this engagement of Mr. Cooper's:—*Macbeth*, 950 dollars; *Jane Shore*, 690; *Hamlet*, 1080; *Wheel of Fortune*, 676; *Richard the Third*, 925; *Lovers' Vows*, 532; *Merchant of Venice*, 643; *Hamlet*, (2d time,) 681; *First part of Henry Fourth*, (supported by a new pantomime called, *Black Beard*,) 819; *Macbeth*, (2d time,) 487; *Pizarro*, 770; *Henry Fifth*, (the tragedian's benefit,) 883. Two additional performances were agreed to, and yielded, the first, *Romeo and Juliet*, 440, and the second, *Othello*, 558.

La Bottier, a dancer, was engaged to get up ballets—but after the departure of Mr. Cooper, the theatre sunk irretrievably. The apparent success during his short engagement, and real receipts, made creditors pressing and impatient. After a struggle of years against the effects of the yellow fever, and all those curses belonging to the interior of an establishment, badly organized when he found it, the manager's health yielded to disappointment and incessant

exertion, and his struggles became proportionably fainter.

On the 1st of January, 1805, he writes, "Oppressed with disease and debt, I commence another year of my life with sentiments of gloom and self-disapprobation. After the present week I must close the theatre for two weeks, to wait the return of Mr. Cooper, who is now playing in Philadelphia."

On the 4th of January, the theatre was closed, and re-opened on the 1st of February. Mr. Cooper played a few nights, but the attraction of novelty was gone, and on the 22d February, the theatre was finally closed, and the management of the man who had sacrificed his health and property in the pursuit of that which eluded his grasp ceased. He gave up his property of every kind. He had found the theatre unfinished outside and in—he left the interior finished and beautified—it was almost void of scenery, and totally so of wardrobe, and all other property—he left it amply furnished; and the performers, under the direction of Messrs. Johnson and Tyler, opened it in the following March, with the use of his property, and all the manuscripts of the retreating author.

Fortunately, the late manager had the house of his mother in the place of his nativity to shelter him and his family; and, though utterly destitute, he had the friendship of all those who had, previous to this voyage and wreck, been his associates. Being no longer connected with the theatre, he is no longer a subject for this work for the present.

CHAPTER XXX.

—Mr. Twaits—Twait's and Cooper—Captain Smith—Boston Theatre—Boston—Death of Mr. Hodgkinson—Philadelphia Company—Mr. Cain—Lessons on Intemperance—New-York Theatre under Johnson and Tyler—Miss Ross—Mrs. Wheatley—Mrs. Jones—Mr. and Mrs. Young—Mr. Fennell a star—Play of the Wanderer—Tars from Tripoli—Manhattan Stage—New-York Theatre leased to Mr. Cooper—Mr. Robinson—Mr. Jones—Mr. and Mrs. Johnson's return to Europe.

THE theatre of New-York was now under the direction of Messrs. Johnson and Tyler, who demanded for their services as managers fifty dollars per week, in addition to their salaries as players. The republic of actors, for such it now was, agreed to give them ten. Mr. Ciceri was in fact their principal man of business.

Mr. Cooper went on to Boston, and was opposed by the company, then about to take benefits. The citizens wished his performances; there was considerable discontent in the theatre, but he played his usual round of characters.

At Baltimore, a tragedy was printed this year, called *Blow for Blow*.

On the 21st of June, Mr. Cooper having arrived

in New-York, and Mr. Twaits, of the Philadelphia theatre, being in the city, the late manager took a benefit night, they playing for him, the first Zanga, the second Caleb Quotem. Nothing but Mr. Cooper's offer of performing on the occasion, which he made by letter from Boston, could have justified trying a night after the benefits of the actors, and in the heat of summer; the receipt was six hundred dollars. Mrs. Villiers, late Miss E. A. Westray, played, on this occasion, Leonora, in *The Revenge*.

As this was the first appearance of Mr. Twaits on the stage of New-York, we will briefly notice his person, his peculiarities, and the characters in which he excelled, among which Caleb Quotem stood very prominent.

Mr. William Twaits was born on the 25th of April, 1781. His father died when he was very young, and he obtained admittance behind the scenes of Drury-lane, through the influence of a playmate, the son of Phillemore, one of the performers. Having determined to be an actor, he stuck to the point, as Colman says, "like a rusty weather-cock," and we suppose, like most of our heroes, ran away. He commenced acting at a place called Waltham Abbey.

We have mentioned that he was brought out to this country by Mr. Wood, for the company of Philadelphia. That gentleman found him, in "old Macready's company at Birmingham," where, and at Sheffield, he was a favourite, "particularly," says Mr. Wood, "being considered one of the best burletta singers in England. He came out on a salary of four guineas a week for

three years, but soon after his arrival it was advanced to six. He was an admirable *opposite* to Jefferson, their styles being so very different." The same may be said of him and Harwood afterwards. Indeed, neither his style of playing, nor his face or person, was like any other individual on or off the stage. Short and thin, yet appearing broad; muscular, yet meagre; a large head, with stiff, stubborn, carrotty hair; long colourless face, prominent hooked nose, projecting large hazel eyes, thin lips, and large mouth, which could be twisted into a variety of expression, and which, combining with his other features, eminently served the purposes of the comic muse—such was the physiognomy of William Twaits. Yet Twaits seriously thought that his features were fitted for tragedy, and that he only wanted height to be like John Kemble. Did Mr. Twaits want common sense? Far, far from it. He had good natural mental powers, which he cultivated occasionally by reading; but he was quite young, and his early education, none. His passions were strong, and had never been disciplined or controlled. He had probably been his own master and adviser from childhood, and was at this time a very young man. Besides, he was encouraged in thinking himself a tragedian, as he had been the Richard and Romeo of many a barn, when he had the promise of the highest salary in the company, nine shillings per week, and was obliged to be content with two-and-sixpence; when he feasted upon a hog's heart and vegetables (cost ninepence, baking a penny) for a week; when he was the best dressed

man in the theatre, owing to his making one clean shirt serve for two nights' playing. He had played every thing, but he was only fitted for comedy—and for that he was eminently fitted.

His voice was powerful, yet he was asthmatic; and his great powers of song, and queer humour, made him as great a favourite with convivialists as with the lovers of comedy. This, with the frequent exertions of his lungs in public and private, ultimately changed asthma into consumption, and he died at the age of twenty-six or under, wasted to a skeleton, a melancholy instance of youth misguided by passion and devoid of a counsellor.

Cooper, being at Philadelphia when Twait's engagement ended, and having become attached to the amusing comedian, induced him to go on to Boston, where the tragedian had an engagement. A greater contrast cannot well be conceived than that between these two, either in person or manners. The tragedian felt that he was, by birth, education, and profession, a gentleman; and always in society asserted his claims in the strongest and firmest manner. Twait had smaller pretensions, at least from education. When the companions, after a successful campaign at the Boston theatre, returned to New-York, Twait used to tell the following and other anecdotes, for the purpose of playfully annoying Cooper.

“As we were returning from Boston, our style of travelling made the folks stare. Our carriage, and servant, and trunks, seemed particularly to excite the curiosity of the landlord at an inn where we stopped

to breakfast ; and he saw that Tom was a great man at once. I was only the great man's companion, and he took an opportunity to inquire who this might be. 'It's the great Mr. Cooper,' said I, 'going on from Boston to New-York.' 'What, a congress-man?' 'No, you must have heard of him—the play-actor.' 'Play-actor!—oh, oh! What does he do?' 'Plays all kind of tricks.' 'Oh, ho! tumbling—rope-dancing—oh, ho!'

"All the landlord's awe of the traveller was gone, but his curiosity yet more fully alive ; and he walked into the room which Cooper had taken possession of to await breakfast, and seated himself to gaze his fill. I followed, and soon after in ran a rough little urchin, and placed himself between his father's knees, who, patting his white head, and looking at Cooper, says, 'Sonny, that's Mr. Cooper, my dear—won't you go to New-York with Mr. Cooper?' 'For what, daddy?' 'Why he'll make an actor of you.' 'What's that, daddy?' 'Oh, he'll learn you to dance the rope, turn over head and heels, and play all kinds of tricks.'"

"Another time," said Twaits, "we had been dining with Andrew Allen, and he took us out to see a new house he was then erecting. Allen entered the unfinished building by a single plank, and invited us to follow. Tom hesitated. 'Come on, Cooper,' cries Allen. 'What,' said Cooper, 'do you bring us here to make us walk the plank?' One of the carpenters, who looked on, and was standing near Tom, says to

him, 'That's a good one, Mr. Cooper, you can't walk that plank? Haven't I seen you walk the rope many a time in the play-house at New-York?'"

These stories Cooper took in good part; but an opportunity offering for retaliation on "Billy," it was seized; and a piece of mischief, commenced by Cooper and his companions, introduced by an accidental circumstance, and continued beyond any calculation of the contrivers, took all the comedian's sportiveness away for the time.

Shortly after Twaits's marriage, he was, one evening, standing in the gallery, looking at Mrs. Twaits's performance of a character in tragedy, when he heard two men near him make some vulgar remarks upon the actress. The husband felt indignant, and addressing the principal speaker, told him that the lady was his wife, and that he would chastise any scoundrel who used such language in respect to her. The fellow was a vulgar blackguard, probably drunk, and with his companion sneaked away. All this might have been very well, but during his excitement the comedian came into the green-room, and, before Cooper and others, related the affair with some degree of swagger. The opportunity was not to be lost for retaliation, and next day Mr. Twaits received a letter requiring apology for the harsh language made use of on the preceding evening, and intimating that the writer would expect to see him at a certain hour at the Albany coffee-house. This was signed John Smith. As was expected by the conspirators, Twaits

carried this letter to Cooper, who being *au fait* in all the punctilios of the duello, told him that he must meet Mr. Smith. "But I will not apologize to the rascal." "Certainly not, he must apologize to you, or give you satisfaction." "Damn the fellow—I don't want to have any thing more to do with him." "You called him a ——" "I called him a scoundrel." "You *must* see him." "You will go with me, Tom?" "Certainly, if you put the affair into my hands." "I don't want to have any thing to do with the black-guard." "You see by this letter that it is a gentleman, and you must go through with it."

To the great delight of the conspirators, the comedian was tortured until the time appointed came, and, with dauntless resolution, attended by his friend, he stalked to the Albany coffee-house, and inquired for Mr. Smith. There was no Mr. Smith there. They waited a due time. No John Smith appeared, and the comedian, breathing more freely, was escorted home by the witness of his courage.

The bar-keeper had said, in answer to queries respecting Mr. Smith, that one Captain Smith sometimes came there. This was a cue for further mischief. Poor Twaits had his dinner marred by receiving a letter with the Philadelphia post-mark, apologizing for John Smith's not meeting him at the Albany coffee-house, he being under the necessity of going to Philadelphia to prepare his ship for a voyage to Europe, but would return to New-York, and require of Mr. Twaits an ample apology. Cooper was to decide on this, and an answer of polite defiance was

dictated by him, and written by Twaits, and delivered to the incendiary. In due time the reply of Mr. Smith arrived from Philadelphia—he would be in New-York on such a day. Mr. Simkins, or Jenkins, his friend, would see Mr. Twaits's friend to arrange a meeting. "Damn the fellow, I don't want to have any thing to do with him—ha, Tom?" "You have put the affair in my hands." "Oh—yes—" "Very well, I will see Mr. Jenkins." "Do you know him?" "Yes—he's a gentleman—there will be no difficulty in arranging a meeting—have you pistols, Billy?" "No—pistols—no." "Mine are at your service."

The conspirators now found a person to represent Mr. Jenkins, and Twaits was a witness to a formal and very courteous interchange of civilities between his friend Tom and the friend of the imaginary Captain Smith, in Broadway, and was told that the result was an appointment next morning at Hoboken.

Thus was this young man tortured day after day. It was like the fable of the boys and frogs. No excuse can be offered for such a hoax—certainly the contrivers did not at first intend to inflict the misery which was the inevitable effect of their unjustifiable prosecution of their joke.

Instead of the meeting, however, another letter came, informing the parties that Captain Smith had been obliged to sail with his ship to the Mediterranean. Captain Smith was pronounced a poltroon, and even *his friend* Mr. Jenkins gave him up.

The conspirators had been so much amused by this plot, and the odd effects produced upon their com-

panion, that they renewed it at a period when Captain Smith might be supposed to have returned from Europe. He was made to write from Philadelphia, lamenting his former want of punctuality, and again calling upon Twaits for the meeting. It was, however, determined that his previous conduct had put him out of the pale of honour ; though neither killed nor wounded, he was "*hors de combat*," and the meeting denied. He was now brought to New-York by the same process which had brought him into existence, and made to threaten personal chastisement. The comedian was obliged by his tormentors to buy pocket-pistols, and go armed against this phantom raised to haunt him.

It is supposed that Twaits never had this hoax explained to him. It had been carried to so great a length that the contrivers did not dare to undeceive him. He probably had a misgiving—but inquiry was both mortifying and dangerous—and Captain Smith and his antagonist were soon both equally creatures of mere memory.

Mrs. Wignell and Mr. Cooper played together in the latter part of June and beginning of July at the Park theatre, New-York ; she performing Calista, Monimia, Juliet, Ophelia, Elvira, and Roxana—he Lothario, Chamont, Romeo, Hamlet, Rolla, and Alexander. He afterwards played Octavian for Twaits's benefit. The theatre was closed on the 10th of July with *Speed the Plough*, and *Children in the Wood*.

Mr. Hodgkinson applied for, and obtained the promise of the theatre. He had, as has been men-

tioned, played at Charleston, under Mr. Placide. He opened there in Osmond, and played all his best characters, except Captain Erlach, which, as *False Shame* had not been published, he could not do. Captain Bertram, in *Fraternal Discord*, he played—but his friend Carpenter calls the play an English comedy from the German. Mrs. Whitlock was the heroine of the Charleston company at that time.

In the autumn of 1805, the Boston theatre was successfully directed by Mr. S. Powell and Mr. Dickson. The principal performers were Mr. Cooper, Mr. Twaits, Mr. and Mrs. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. Dickson, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, Mr. Usher, Mrs. Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. Young, and Mr. Bernard.

The writer passed the months of September and October of the year 1805 in Boston, and frequently witnessed the performances of the Federal-street theatre. He remembers with pleasure Bernard's old-school Doricourt, and Mrs. Darley's pleasing Letitia Hardy. Mr. Dickson was the Hardy; Twaits the Flutter. Of *Douglas* and *The Turnpike Gate*, he remembers Mrs. Shaw's Lady Randolph as respectable, and Mr. Young's Glenalvon as very poor; Mr. Usher more than respectable in *Old Norval*, and Cooper uncommonly fine in *Douglas*. Twaits's *Crack* was excellent. Of *John Bull*, he remembers the inferiority of Bernard's Dennis, when compared to Harwood's, and the excellence of Twaits's Dan. He remembers Young being substituted for Cooper (who was unwell) in *Octavian*, and received with applause, most undeserved. He remembers the pleasant co-

medy of *The Heir at Law*, and *Inkle and Yarico*, played to empty benches. Little more of Boston theatricals can be recorded as appertaining to this time, from frail and imperfect memory.

Col. David Humphreys then resided in Boston, and to his polite attentions the writer owed many pleasant hours. He communicated the mauuscript of a comedy for his opinion. The piece was not calculated to add to Col. Humphreys' literary reputation.

The writer's first visit to Boston was in 1791, and again in 1796; this of 1805 was the third. In 1813 he passed some weeks there, and again in 1822. His note on the town of Boston in 1805 may be interesting to those who now see it a splendid city in 1832.

On my first visit to this town, I received many civilities from Rev. Jedediah Morse, Dr. Lloyd, Mr. Blagg, Sheriff Allen, and Judge Lowell. Mr. Samuel Cooper was particularly attentive to me. All is changed. With the last mentioned gentleman I remember a ride to a bowling-green, where I first saw John Quincy Adams, and was introduced to him. A very dissimilar person was among the bowlers. "That," said Cooper, "is——, a fellow half knave, half idiot, who has made a fortune by speculations which have thrown money into his pocket, as fools are sometimes enriched by a lottery ticket." The man was seated, and looking at the players with lacklustre eye, but rising, displayed a thin meagre figure, dressed in vulgar finery, his round unmeaning face rendered more so by a flaxen tie-wig—when he spoke,

his voice would suddenly break from something like manly bass to "childish treble," and piped and whistled most ludicrously. "I lost my voice," he said, or attempted to say, "by eating too many oysters—Oh, how sick I was!"—I was introduced to him as from New-York. "Maybe the gentleman deals in paper—I just sold ten thousand dollars—strange how I manage it—ha! Don't know a figure—do it here (pointing to his head,) reckon all here—I always thought I should be rich—there's the house at——, and the farm at——, and the house at——, and ten thousand pounds in the bank—not to mention any thing of the lands in Ohio." "But," said Samuel Cooper, "when you bought your house from Chester, didn't he offer you his commission?" "Yes, his justice's commission for last year—s'pose he thought I would think it like a British officer's commission—thought I was a fool—great many people think so—I'll tell you how I served him. Says I, 'Mr. Chester,' says I—'I never make two words to a bargain—what I offered you for your house,' says I, 'that I give you—but I must have time to consider of it.' So he went away. By-and-by he comes again. 'Well,' says he, 'what will you give for my commission?' Says I, 'Mr. Chester,' says I—'I never make many words to a bargain—what I say I'll give, I'll give, and no more. Now here's what I think it's worth,' says I,—and I put my hand in my pocket so—no—this pocket—no—why where?—I've lost—no! Here it is. 'Here,' says I, 'is the worth of it'—and I twisted off a quid of

tobacco—so—‘that’s the worth of the commission!’ He told afterward ‘——’s no fool,’ says he; ‘never found a tighter fellow to make a bargain.’”

The town of Boston is built upon a peninsula, which projects from the main land and points north. It is connected with Roxbury by an isthmus. It is situated at the bottom of Massachusetts Bay, which to the west of the town is called Charles’ River. The deep indentations in its margin make the shape of the peninsula very irregular, and the streets, owing to this shape and the hilly surface, are equally so. The north part of the town, called “North End,” and the parts adjacent, form the original town of Boston. There took place those important transactions on which the fate of America hung. The more recent town extends southward and westward, and will be in a short time joined to the village of Roxbury. Part of the new town is on high ground, surrounding a superb new state-house, which is on the loftiest eminence, only overtopped by its immediate neighbour, the apex of Beacon Hill. Here the houses are spacious and elegant. In 1790, the population was estimated at 18,000, now (1805,) 36,000. The greatest length of the town is two miles, its greatest width one mile and 417 feet. It is generally pretty well paved, and there is a sufficient number of lamps which are without oil six months in the year. In the winter they are permitted to give light to the night wanderer—in summer he must find his way without. The increase of population which follows successful commerce will occasion encroachments on the bay—

already the ground is prepared for a new street, to be called Broad-street, on the east of the town ; and the hill called Mount Vernon is rapidly descending into the waters on the west. The harbour of Boston is very beautiful, and is studded with islands—though I think there is no point from which it can be viewed, that gives a view equal to that we have of the harbour of New-York from the Battery. From the bridge to Dorchester, yet unfinished, the view of Boston is very fine. The eye takes in the Neck, part of the harbour and shipping, the south part of the town, and the west town towering over it; the whole crowned by the state-house, which from its situation is seen with its foundations apparently resting upon the tops of the houses, and looks like the dome of an immense building, whose body is hid by the surrounding trees and edifices.

So Boston appeared in 1791 to the stranger, who was equally delighted by the surrounding country and villages. He has seen it since in its progressive improvement up to 1822. Ten years have doubtless added to its magnitude and splendour.

The yellow fever appeared again in New-York early in the autumn of 1805, and Mr. Hodgkinson, having made an engagement for the city of Washington, left the first-named place without having made arrangements for the ensuing season, or even taking possession of the theatre. He went on to Philadelphia, as his friend Carpenter, in the *Mirror of Taste*, states, and stayed four days with one of “his most zealous friends, Mr. Richard Potter, the merchant,

elate with the good fortune that awaited him, and delighting his friends with his conversation, his anecdote, and song." He proceeded, after this four days' residence at Philadelphia, to Baltimore, and one of his companions told the writer that he passed the day at the Point, opposite the city, on a party of pleasure, crossing at midnight in an open boat, much heated. The weather was warm, and he threw off his coat and crossed the water without it. Between Baltimore and Washington, Carpenter states that he stopped at a place called —Ferry, and went out shooting—" returned overheated, and wet with profuse perspiration," borrowed clothes of the landlord and "sat down to the table," and "spent the time in jollity and song till night came on." He then put on his shirt, which had been hanging in the open air till the heavy dew of the evening "saturated it"—fever followed, and, being unable to go on with the stage, he stopped on the evening of Sunday, the 8th, (of September, 1805,) at an inn within twelve miles of Washington. On the arrival of the stage at Washington without him, Greene the manager and Harwood "set off to meet him, and on Monday morning they arrived" at Stelle's tavern, where he died on the succeeding Thursday (the 12th of September,) between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. This is Carpenter's account, and this is called dying of yellow fever taken at New-York.

The news of yellow fever being in New-York had reached Washington. Hodgkinson had come from New-York,—and Harwood told the writer that Greene

and himself, hearing from the stage-driver, (they being on the look-out for Hodgkinson,) that a man answering to his description was left behind sick, took a carriage and went on to him. The next morning he was better, and returned with them to Washington, where, at the hotel, they put him under the care of a physician, and left him. They did not see him again until the keeper sent word that he was worse. They went to the hotel, and were told that he was dying of yellow fever. Previous to entering his room, they "peeped in and saw him in agonies, with his head hanging over the bed-side, and by him a negro girl. They entered, and remained in the room until he died." "He was in continual agitation, from pain and excessive terror of death, and presented the most horrid spectacle that the mind can imagine; he was, as soon as dead, wrapped in a blanket, and carried to the burying field by some negroes." There the body lay until Greene and Harwood had it put in a coffin and interred. Such is the account given to the writer by John E. Harwood, at Philadelphia, on the 22d of December, 1805, not three months after the event, and then minuted.

"His remains were wrapped up in a blanket by negroes," says Carpenter, "who were induced by a considerable reward to perform the office, and conveyed to an obscure burying-ground, on the Baltimore road, where they were left entirely unattended till a shell of a coffin was made, and a grave hastily dug, into which he was thrown."

At this time, September, 1805, the Boston theatre

was under the management of Mr. S. Powell. The company consisted of Mr. Cooper, Mr. Twaits, Mr. Bernard, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, Mrs. Powell, Mrs. Darby, and Messrs. Usher, Kenny, Fox, and Young. The writer had an opportunity of seeing Bernard's Dennis Brulgruddery, and Twaits's Dan together; the last by far the best. Mrs. Darley was Mary Thornberry herself.

In the winter of 1805-6, the theatre at Philadelphia was well conducted. The prominent performers were Warren, Wood, Jefferson, Francis, Morris, Harwood, Cain, Woodham; Mesdames Wignell, Jefferson, Wood, Woodham, Francis, Morris, Melmoth. Of these only three are new to this work. Mr. Woodham was a singer of merit. Mrs. Woodham played comedy and romps. She was a pretty woman, but not as an actress to be placed in the first rank.

In December, Harwood played for the first time in six years in that city.

Mr. Cain, for some time considered the rival of Mr. Wood in Philadelphia, was born at Deptford, near London, but was educated in the neighbourhood of Burlington, New-Jersey, and generally considered an American candidate for fame; while Wood, an American, was thought a foreigner. Mr. Cain was young, handsome, with "health, a remarkably juvenile appearance, fine voice, and ability; advantages," says Mr. Wood, "which nothing but the actor's bane, brandy, could have deprived him of." He was idle—the last is the inevitable consequence of the first.

To publish a list of the victims to brandy or intemperance who have fallen under the writer's view, and were among the professors of the histrionic art, would at first glance appear as a libel on the theatre. But, if examined in connexion with the list the same writer could present, of those who had fewer seductive inducements, and stronger incitements to virtuous conduct, and yet have fallen, the melancholy truth would appear that, throughout society in England and America, the indulgence in drunkenness—let the vile thing have its vile name—has been frightful. May the blessings of mankind and the reward of well-doing rest on those who have rendered the vice as infamous as it is loathsome and destructive !

Has the theatre done its part, as a school of morality, to check this evil? No. It has been represented in plays as a venial vice—the drunkard has been a theme for laughter, but not an object of detestation. The consequence of drunkenness has only been (as we now remember) shown in its true light by one dramatist—and that the greatest—yet his lessons have not been strong enough for the subject. In the American play of *The Italian Father*, it is true, we have moral lessons on sobriety and temperance ; but the scenes of riot at which the thoughtless laugh, remain indelible, while the strains of wisdom, even from Shakspeare's mouth, are forgotten. How few remember

—“ He that doth the ravens feed,
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age !”—“ Let me be your servant ;
Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty :

For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors to my blood ;
Nor did with unbashful forehead woo
The means of weakness and debility ;
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
Frosty, but kindly :”

OR,—

“ What, are you hurt, lieutenant ?

“ *Cassio*. Aye, past all surgery.”—“ Reputation, reputation, reputation ! I have lost my reputation. I have lost the immortal part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial.”—“ Drunk ? and speak parrot ? and squabble ? swagger ? swear ? and discourse fustian with one’s shadow ? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil !”—“ O that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains ! That we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts !”—“ To be now a sensible man, by-and-by a fool, and presently a beast ! O strange ! every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil.”

What can be finer, what more true than this ?—but the million, we fear, are more apt to remember *Iago*’s words than *Cassio*’s. *Locke* tells us the story of the two parrots—one had learned to bully and blaspheme, and the other to repeat the words of wisdom. They were placed together in the hope of reforming the noisy blackguard—but noise prevailed, and both became bullies. May not some dramatist show the misery resulting from the beastly vice of drunkenness, not only to the wretched individual himself, but to parents and relatives, to the wife and the child ? Or would the fastidious turn from the scene ? or the jovial fellow hiss it ? We believe, if made the theme of true genius, the lesson would be received from the stage, and aid the efforts which the

friends of humanity are making to banish from society the most debasing and irrational of all the many sources of human misery.

The company of Messrs. Johnson and Tyler consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr Tyler, Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mr. Martin, Mr. Hogg. Messrs. Hallam, jun., Saubere, Shapter, Sanderson, and Allen; Mesdames Jones, Simpson, Villiers, G. Marshall; and Misses White, Dellinger, Ross, and Graham.

The house was opened on the 18th of November, 1805, with *Abälino* and *The Adopted Child*, to a receipt of 800 dollars; Mr. Barrett playing Abälino, in which he had been eminently successful in Boston.

Miss Ross, so well known since and so justly admired as Mrs. Wheatley, made her first appearance as Kitty Sprightly, and evinced a dawning of talent. Mrs. Wheatley has long been one of the best performers on the American stage. She was born at St. John's, Nova Scotia, in the year 1790. Her parents were Scotch. Her father was Lieutenant Ross, of the 42d regiment. He died when Miss Ross was two years of age, and her mother returned to New-York, the place of her marriage, and of course the infant with her. From that time it was the place of her residence. Miss Ross made her debut on the 12th of November, 1805. Mrs. Johnson saw her *promise*, and gave her instruction. She married Mr. Wheatley in 1806, and withdrew from the stage, but, her husband failing in business, she returned to it again for the support of her family. Success has crowned her industry and talents, and she has long been one of

the ornaments of the New-York theatre. She first exerted herself in this arduous profession for the support of her mother, and afterwards for the maintenance and education of her children. Her reward is an approving conscience, competency, and the esteem of all who know her. For several seasons her talents were not appreciated, perhaps not discovered.

Mrs. Jones was the great attraction of this season. She was announced as from the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, London, and late of the Boston theatre, where she had been a very great favourite. Her first appearance in New-York was on the 27th of November, as Albina in *The Will*, and Leonora in *The Padlock*. This lady's acting and singing were much approved. Her figure was *petite*, and face pleasing. She died on the 11th November, 1806. She was the sister of those distinguished actors, the Messrs. Wal-lack, and has left to the society of America a valuable member in the wife of Mr. Simpson, the manager (1832) of the Park theatre.

On the 9th of December, *The Voice of Nature* and *The Children in the Wood* were performed for the benefit of the orphan children of Mr. Hodgkinson. Fennell played Rinaldo in the first, and the little girls the children in the afterpiece.

On the 23d of December, Mr. and Mrs. Young, from Norwich, England, and from the Boston theatre, appeared in Octavian and Agnes, in *The Mountaineers*. Mrs. Young was young and beautiful, and her Agnes pleasing.

In January, 1806, Mr. Fennell became a star, and



played Hamlet, Penraddock, Lord Hastings, Othello, Jaffier, Macbeth, and Richard; the last at his benefit.

Several candidates for stage honours appeared and disappeared, and one attempt was made by "a young gentleman of New-York" as a dramatist, probably thinking the way cleared by the removal of the monopolizing manager-author. *The Wanderer* was performed, condemned, and being, before condemnation, announced for repetition, another play was substituted.

Tars from Tripoli, an alteration from Dibdin's *Naval Pillar*, was played several times. Mr. Turnbull took a benefit as the author.

On the 3d of March, Mr. Cooper commenced playing in New-York, on an engagement for five nights, Hamlet, Richard, Lord Hastings, Macbeth, and Leon in *Itule a Wife and Have a Wife*. In this character he has been very successful. He played Beverley for his benefit, and repeated it for the benefit of the managers. On the 17th of March, Mr. Jefferson came from Philadelphia, to play on the stage of his former fame, and performed Jacob Gawky, Diddler, Bobby Pendragon, Doctor Lenitive, Toby Allspice, and Ralph in *Lock and Key*. On the 9th of April, Mr. Harwood returned to New-York for the remainder of the season, opening in Dennis Brulgruddery.

In April, Williams, alias Anthony Pasquin, produced a piece, called *The Manhattan Stage*, which was damned. Huggins, the hair-dresser, published a formal notification that he was not the author.

As this wretched man, by bringing forward his wretched play in New-York, is entitled to our notice, we will quote a few lines from Bernard's Reminiscences respecting him. "He wore his conscience in his pocket, and wore them both out together. Money was his only principle; and he fitted praise to the backs of ministers or actors as he would have done a coat, agreeably to price and order. Passing over this unpleasant ground of notoriety (which made its object walk continually between the two fires of horse-whip and pillory), in his person he presented a greater. Daniel Dancer himself was a clean and decent individual compared to Anthony Pasquin. He seemed to have a passion for dirt" (his ideas were as dirty as his clothes); "he always looked as if he had just been expelled from a poor-house or a prison."

We have before had occasion to notice the offer made by this individual to officiate as the manager's salaried *puff*. Yet this man's writings—a man who was characterized from the bench of one of the high courts of justice in his own country as *one* "whose praise was infamy, and touch pollution"—are gravely quoted as authority by an author of the same name, who has recently published two elegantly printed and valuable volumes, giving "The Life of Sir Thomas Lawrence." The accuracy of this work in most respects cannot be doubted; in that which concerns America, however, it may be judged of by the following extract.

After stating that the American Academy of Fine Arts sent Lawrence a diploma, certifying that he had

been chosen an honorary member, the author goes on to say : " In appreciation of this honour, Sir Thomas Lawrence immediately painted for the Academy a full-length likeness of Mr. West, the president of the English Academy, and, as it is well known, a native of America."

Now as we know that this is a fable, without wishing to deprive the eminent painter of any credit justly his due, we state that he did not make any present whatever in return for " this honour." On the contrary, being applied to, in the way of business, to paint the portrait of Mr. West for New-York, and West consenting to sit, Lawrence fixed his price at two thousand dollars, which sum was raised by the subscription of lawyers, painters, physicians, and merchants, at one hundred dollars each, and remitted to the painter. The portrait was deposited with the Academy, and is one of the finest specimens of the art from the pencil of this eminent man. But it was ordered and paid for. As we constituted a part of the directory of the American Academy, we speak, not fearing contradiction. To Sir Thomas Lawrence the artists of America owe pleasure and instruction ; his works are their delight and their study ; they admire him as a painter and as a man ; but the Academy of the country received no particular favours from him.

To revert to the drama. About the time to which we have brought down our annals, Mr. John K. Beekman made an arrangement with Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, by which Beekman was to become proprietor,

and Cooper lessee of the New-York theatre. Fifteen thousand dollars were to be appropriated to the alteration of the building, and more if required. Mr. J. J. Holland was employed as the architect. The writer was engaged, at a liberal yearly income, to take the general superintendence of the business.

After making these arrangements, Mr. Cooper went on to Charleston, to repeat his list of characters, and Mr. Twaits made his appearance in Richard the Third!

In May, Mr. Barrett, the present very excellent performer in genteel comedy, played, as Master Barrett, for the benefit of his parents. He enacted Young Norval twice, on the 5th and on the 23d of May. In more advanced years, he very judiciously bade adieu to Melpomene.

The conduct of the Hallams, which had been a sore annoyance under the former management, now became so insupportable, that Messrs. Johnson and Tyler were obliged to dismiss Mr. Hallam, jun., for a brutal attempt to assault Mr. Tyler, made in presence of the elder Hallam, and only prevented by the interference of several performers, the outrage being attempted at the time the performance of a play was going forward. For this act of self-defence, the dismissal of Hallam, jun., Johnson and Tyler were arraigned in one of the public prints; and, in their defence, they stated the conduct of father and son, and that "the eldest Mr. Hallam receives sixty dollars weekly for such services as he can render in his infirmities."

Mr. Hopkins Robinson, who has the merit of having raised himself from the tailor's shopboard to the stage of the theatre, at this time filled respectably many parts of the drama.

In January, 1806, Master John Howard Payne, afterwards to be noticed as a performer and dramatist, commenced a publication, entitled "The Thespian Mirror," which was discontinued on the 18th of March. He was then under fourteen years of age.

Mr. Jones died at Charleston, on the 7th of August, 1806; he possessed a good person, and talents for serious speaking of more than common magnitude. It will be remembered that a low comedian of the same name died at the same place many years before; *i. e.* in 1797.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson did not engage with Mr. Cooper, but returned once more to England.

Mr. Holland being engaged at Philadelphia, and Mr. Ciceri not agreeing to Mr. Cooper's proposals, and going to France, the theatre was for a time without an architect or scene-painter.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Philadelphia Company in 1806—Mr. Cooper opens the New-York Theatre—Company—Mr. Morse—Mr. Cooper's second Season of Management—Theatre re-modelled—Boston Theatre—New-York Theatre under Cooper and Price—Mr. Twaits's Prince of Wales—Death of Mr. Hallam—Theatre in Lexington, Kentucky—Death of Mrs. Warren—Master Payne's first Appearance—Comedy of Man and Wife—The Duke of Buckingham—Mr. and Mrs. Duff.

IN the year 1806, the Philadelphia company was composed of Messrs. Wood, M'Kenzie, Warren, Mills, Webster, Woodham, Cone, Cross, Cain, Francis, Robins, Sanderson, Blissett, Bailey, Jefferson, Taylor, Durang, Bray, and Seymour; Mesdames Melmoth, Woodham, Wood, Warren (late Wignell), Francis, Seymour, Morris, Jefferson, Cunningham, Mills, and Miss Hunt.

On the 6th of October, 1806, the theatre of New-York was opened under the direction of Mr. Thomas A. Cooper. The company engaged were Messrs. Tyler, Harwood, Twaits, Hogg, Darley, Martin, Hallam, jun., Saubere, Fennell, Shapter, and Rutherford; Mesdames Villiers, Darley, Simpson, Oldmixon, and Miss Dellinger.

Mrs. Placide, the second wife of the Charleston manager, and daughter of Mrs. Pownall (once Wrighten) played two or three times successfully.

On the 28th of November, Mr. Morse made his first appearance on the stage in *Pierre*,—Cooper, his instructor, playing Jaffier. He succeeded so far that the play was repeated, and Mr. Morse continued in the company. This gentleman, the son of a Massachusetts yeoman, had been destined by his father for the law, and educated accordingly; but he travelled out of the record, and preferred a life of dissipation and adventure to the dull routine of duty, or the study of Coke upon Lyttleton: and a life of adventure he had. After playing under Cooper in various theatrical establishments, he was for a time the hero of the Boston company. He possessed a towering figure, more than six feet in height, a face rather round for a hero; limbs muscular and well formed, particularly the legs, which were a beautiful compound of the Hercules and Apollo; his voice was good, and his judgment of his author tolerable. His early associates had not been of the most polished kind, and consequently he lacked the ease of a gentleman at the time of his debut. With such talents and such a person, he determined to try London, and did so with some success; but in that vast metropolis the handsome Yankee's head was turned, and he was all but lost in unbridled dissipation. He returned to Boston little more than a skeleton, and with entire loss of the sight of an eye. He so far regained his health, that on the breaking out of the second war

with England, he entered the army, and served in Macomb's regiment. At the close of the war he was destitute ; but he told a good story, and that recommended him for what a chaplain *then was* on board one of our famous frigates. He went one or more cruises in this capacity, and had leisure to reflect on his follies and his consequent sufferings : his health had been fully re-established ; and he, with a grateful heart, determined to devote himself to the service of God, and the instruction of his fellow-men, as a minister of the episcopal church. During his preparatory studies, he became a real chaplain to the frigate in which he had taken this salutary resolution from reflection and conviction.

In the year 1819, a gentleman who had known Mr. Morse in 1806, and subsequently while he was on the stage, and again when he was in the army, being at Norfolk, was struck by the elegant appearance of a gentleman in black, who had just landed from the Portsmouth ferry-boat. This was on a Sunday morning, as the stranger stood at the door of his hotel, waiting the hour of attending the Episcopal church, where, he was told, the Reverend Mr. Low, who had once been a player, was that day to take leave of his congregation, in consequence of ill health. Mr. Low reserved his strength for his sermon, and the tall elegant gentleman, now in canonicals, read the service. The uncommon propriety of his reading, and the musical cadence of his powerful voice, arrested the stranger's attention, and some of the tones sounded familiar to his ear. He was at the greatest distance

from the pulpit of which a very long church admitted, and in the gallery. He could not resist the desire to use an opera-glass, and immediately perceived that it was his old acquaintance, the tragedian. Thus in the same pulpit, at one time, were two men who had both been players. Mr. Low was the son of the author mentioned in an early portion of this work, whose play was rejected by Hallam and Henry. The son was a man of talents and virtue ; his talents were not fitted for the stage, but eminently so for the pulpit. Mr. Morse was at this time still attached to the United States frigate, but soon after received deacon's orders from Bishop Moore, of Virginia, and settled at Williamsburg, where the Old American Company first played in 1752. In this ancient metropolis of Virginia he died, after a short, eventful life, passed as a lawyer, actor, soldier, sailor, and clergyman.

Mr. Rutherford, from the Philadelphia theatre, appeared for the first time in New-York, as George Barnwell, on the 2d of January, 1807 ; and on the 19th, Mr. Bernard commenced playing for six nights. His characters were Lord Ogilby, Sheva, Ruttekin, (very like Edwin's,) Lovegold, Touchstone, Farmer Ashfield, Sir Robert Ramble, Dennis Brulgruddery, and Sharp.

In February, the late Mrs. Wignell, now Mrs. Warren, played her usual characters in New-York ; and, in March, Mr. Cooper returned the compliment by playing in Philadelphia. In April, 1807, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, and Mr. Morse went to Charleston, and

Mr. John E. Martin died of what is improperly called consumption.

In the July following, a theatre was opened at Vauxhall Gardens, in the Bowery, by a part of the Philadelphia company; and the two principal comedians of the New-York company, Twaits and Harwood, made an excursion to Ballston Springs, where they engaged a large room, and commenced a medley of entertainments, consisting of readings, recitations, and singing. They found for an assistant the celebrated Mr. Huggins (the same who formally denied being the author of Anthony Pasquin's or Williams's comedy of *The Manhattan Stage*). Huggins hailed them as brother-actors, for he had been one of Harper's company in Newport, and volunteered his services, officiating in the double capacity of hair-dresser and door-keeper.

The second season of Mr. Cooper's management commenced on the 9th of September, 1807; the company consisted of the same performers as the last, with the addition of Mr. and Mrs. Claude, Messrs. Spear, Comer, and Greene.

Mr. Greene had now become an actor of considerable merit, and made his debut in Sir William Dorillon. Previously to this opening, the theatre had been taken to pieces, except the walls and the stage, and rebuilt under the direction of Mr. J. J. Holland. It was to appearance (within) a new house, and the whole proscenium was in fact new. We copy the following description of it:—

“ This Theatre has lately undergone considerable

alterations, which have materially added to the comfort and convenience of the spectators. The audience part, which is entirely rebuilt, now consists of four rows of boxes; in the lower lobby, there is a handsome colonnade, with mirrors, and fireplaces at each end, the whole lighted by glass lamps between the columns. In every part of the theatre, the spectator may both hear and see the performance. The box-fronts, instead of being, as usual, perpendicular, fall in at top, and thus give room to the knees, which is considered an improvement upon the plan of all former theatres. There are several coffee-rooms, one of which is fitted in an elegant style for the accommodation of the ladies, where they may be supplied with every kind of fruit, confections, tea, coffee, &c. This room is spacious, the furniture in the newest fashion, and is lighted by three elegant chandeliers suspended from the ceiling. In case of fire, there are three communications from the boxes with the street, and two from the pit. The boxes will accommodate upwards of 1600 persons, and the pit and gallery about 1100. The ceiling painted as a dome, with panels of a light purple, and gold mouldings; the centre a balustrade and sky. The box-fronts (except the fourth row) are divided into panels, blue ground, with white and gold ornaments; a crimson festoon drapery over each box. The lower boxes are lighted by ten glass chandeliers, projecting from the front, and suspended from gilt iron brackets, and the whole house is extremely well lighted. There are four private boxes, with rooms to retire to on the stage. A beautiful effect

is produced by a large oval mirror at the end of the stage boxes, which reflects the whole of the audience on the first row.

“ The whole of the alterations and improvements were completed under the superintendence of Mr. Holland, in the short space of three months, and the whole amount of expenditure (a circumstance which rarely happens) is less than the estimate by five thousand dollars.”

As the Park theatre was originally constructed, and as it remained until the proscenium was remodelled by Mr. Holland, there were no pillars as props to the upper boxes: they were supported by timbers projecting from the walls, and appeared, with their tenons, self-balanced. Of course, there were no obstructions in front of the boxes, as is commonly the case; and however ornamental pillars so placed may be, it is undeniable that they impede the view of the spectator, and prevent his seeing more or less of the stage. Another peculiarity belonged to the boxes of this theatre, as first erected. There was a large box occupying the front of the second tier, and directly in front of the stage, capable of containing between two and three hundred persons, which was called “ The Shakspeare,” and was the resort of the critics, as the pit of the English theatres had been in former times. The remodelled building had none of the above peculiarities. It was a more splendid and more commodious theatre than that which it superseded.

We have, in a preceding chapter, mentioned the engagement of Mr. Holland by Mr. Wignell, at the

Italian Opera-house, London, and his arrival in this country. We have repeated from himself the story of his first landing in New-York, and his astonishment at finding himself in a great city, instead of a wilderness or a prairie. Mr. Holland was very young, although a married man, at the time he arrived : many older persons form equally erroneous ideas of our country. It is but lately that it has been made a subject of contemplation or thought for Europeans. Some have crossed the Atlantic expecting a wilderness, and some, even of what are called the well informed, have looked for a Utopia,—the *best informed* forgetting that we have to contend not only against the vices of our own state of society, but all the complicated crimes engendered by the governments of Europe, and brought to us by those who fly from justice or oppression.

John Joseph Holland was a man of warm affections and amiable disposition. He was one of the few European artists of merit who have chosen this country as their own : he loved it, and learned to appreciate its manners and institutions. He had been neglected by his father, but Marinelli, of the Opera-house, was pleased with the boy, and took him as a pupil at the age of nine. He made him an architect and a scene-painter ; and he made himself a good landscape-painter in water-colours, by application in his hours of leisure from business. He was a favourite with his manager, Wignell, and the friend of Merry and his accomplished wife. This excellent artist and truly good-hearted man died still in the prime of life. Of

his pupils, we have with us two who, by their talent as artists and conduct as citizens, deserve the high esteem in which they are held. Mr. Hugh Reinagle, son of the professor of music, and former manager of the Chesnut-street theatre, Philadelphia, and Mr. John Eyers, are the distinguished pupils of Mr. John Joseph Holland to whom we refer.

The theatre, as rebuilt by Mr. Holland, was destroyed by fire in 1820, shortly after the death of the architect, and the present Park house was erected on the same foundation and walls.

In January, 1808, the Boston theatre was at a very low ebb, and Bernard, the manager, playing in Philadelphia. Messrs. Cooper, Twaits, and Harwood, went on to Boston, and the theatre, which had been closed, was re-opened, and revived by their exertions. Bernard, having finished his Philadelphia engagement, came on to New-York, and the theatre of that place was re-opened on the 17th of February, 1808. He played his usual round of characters, but without success; and Messrs. Cooper, Twaits, and Harwood, returning on the 4th of March, *The Curfew* was brought out with some success: but *Cinderella*, a pantomime, got up by Mr. Holland with great splendour and taste, eclipsed all other dramatic efforts, and silenced all dramatists who only spoke to the ear. Mr. Twaits directed the stage business of this splendid show. In rehearsing the piece, the duty required of the band was so great, that they rebelled; but all difficulties yielded to the determination of the manager.

The New-York theatre was opened on the 9th of September, 1808, under the management of Messrs. Cooper and Price, the latter having purchased into the business. The *School of Reform* and *Padlock* were the opening pieces. The company was the same as last year, except that Mr. Green and Mr. and Mrs. Claude were not with it, and Mrs. Hogg, Mrs. Lipman, and Messrs. Huntington, Doyle, and Lindsley, were added. Mrs. Villiers was now Mrs. Twaits.

On the 7th of November, Mr. Twaits played the Prince of Wales, and the ridicule he drew upon himself was justly merited: his excellence within his proper sphere was great beyond praise; but for the hero or the gentleman, his figure, face, and manner, all disqualified him. The irony of the following is cutting, but wholesome:—

“ On Monday evening, the admirers of the histrionic art were regaled with an exquisite repast, in the exhibition of Shakspeare’s tragedy of *Henry the Fourth, Part First*. The waggeries of the merry old knight were never given with more richness, taste, and effect on our boards than by Mr. Harwood: we pronounce Falstaff the finest among all his characters. The fiery Hotspur found an able representative in Mr. Cooper, who undoubtedly is, in our opinion, an actor of great and sterling abilities. Mr. Twaits personated the Prince of Wales, and Mr. Shapter personified the king,—a most worthy father for such a worthy son.

“ Hitherto our taste has been shocked with the constant repetition of heroes of the true Patagonian

breed ; but the judgment of the manager, justly offended at such huge representatives of true greatness, induced him to gratify us with one of natural and historical dimensions : besides, it is evident that Shakspeare intended the prince to be a little man, for his colleague Falstaff styles him “ eelskin, dried neat’s tongue, tailor’s yard,” &c. Moreover, Alexander the Great was but five feet six inches in stature ; Bonaparte within two inches of him ; and Mr. Twaits but three inches under the smallest of them.

“ From his able performance of Caleb Quotem, Lingo, Dr. Pangloss, Launcelot Gobbo, &c. &c. we were always of opinion that he was peculiarly adapted to the weightier parts of the drama, and our presages were amply realized in his personification of the prince. He looked the character to a tittle, and his manly face displayed the very seat and front of royalty : his action was totally disencumbered of those measured attitudes so contrary to simple elegance, but was easy and familiar : and above all, the deep sepulchral tones of his voice were modulated to the most touching pathos.

“ Seldom have we witnessed such a scene as that in the third act, where the prince first meets his royal parent, and swears to expiate all his former follies. Mr. Shapter really outdid himself in the utterance of the speech beginning,

Had I so lavish of my presence been,
So common hackneyed in the eyes of men,
So stale and cheap to vulgar company ;

Opinion, that did help me to the crown,
 Had left me in reputeless banishment,
 A fellow of no mark or likelihood :
 But, being seldom seen, I could not stir
 But like a comet I was wondered at,
 That men shall tell their children, *there he is*.

“ Mr. Twaits’s answer was given with equal force and eloquence, beginning,

I shall hereafter, thrice gracious lord,
Be more myself, &c.

“ The final scene was marked with the same glow of feeling and effect ; where the prince tells Hotspur,

And all the budding honours of thy crest
 I’ll crop, to make a garland for my head !

“ We recommend to Mr. Twaits a larger stick than the one he wore.

“ Mr. Tyler, though occasionally incorrect in the character of Worcester, is nevertheless an improving actor, and of considerable promise.

“ Before we conclude this merited eulogium on dramatic merit, we must not omit the performance of young Oliff, in the character of Gadshill. This gentleman’s figure is rather against him ; but his voice is sonorous and musical ; we recommend him to correct his gestures, which, though expressive, and like that excellent actor Mr. Twaits, *easy*,—nevertheless, want the *grace* of that gentleman.”

Mr. Lewis Hallam, whose uncle, William Hallam, had deserved the appellation of the father of the

American stage, and whose father, Lewis Hallam, had actually planted the drama in America, died at Philadelphia on the 1st of November, 1808,—aged, according to the statement made by himself to the writer, that he was twelve years of age when he came from England with his father and mother in 1752, 68,—but according to the account of his death published at the time, 73. On Mr. Cooper's taking the New-York theatre, he declined engaging Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, for reasons which may be gathered from the preceding pages. A benefit was given to him on the 14th of January, 1807.

M. G. Lewis's tragedy of *Adelgitha* was played for the first time in America on the 14th of November, and was successful.

A farce of Charles Kemble's was brought out on the 18th, and condemned.

Mr. Cooper's practice at this time was to perform in New-York on Monday and Wednesday, and in Philadelphia on Friday and Saturday, which kept him on the road no small portion of his time.

December 12, 1808. Mr. Cooper's benefit, 810 dollars—*Adelgitha* and *Blind Boy*. On the Wednesday following, (14th,) he closed his engagement with Octavian, and set off the next day for Philadelphia; where, having played for three nights, he took his benefit on the 21st, and proceeded to Charleston. There was about 1000 dollars in the Philadelphia house; and in Charleston his receipts were uncommonly great at this time.

December 19. Mrs. Stanley, announced as from

the London, Boston, and Philadelphia theatres, and engaged for four nights, made her debut in *Lady Townley* and *Roxalana*. This lady was the wife of the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Twisleton, brother to Lord Saye and Sele ; but, seized with a theatrical mania, in despite of the rank and profession of her husband, she resolved upon going on the stage : a separation, *a mensa et thoro*, was the consequence. She came out to America in 1807, engaged by Mr. Bernard for the Boston theatre. She played her round of characters at Philadelphia, concluding with *Violante*, on the 12th of December. At New-York she attracted but little attention ; and on no one of the five nights that she performed did the manager make the expenses of the house. The characters she played were *Widow Cheerly*, *Mrs. Sullen*, and *Portia*, in *The Merchant of Venice*, for her benefit : there were not more than 300 dollars in the house. Mrs. Twisleton, or Stanley, died suddenly, at Burlington, Vermont, on her way from the United States to the provinces of Canada. She was not admired or successful in America.

December 21. *Fraternal Discord*, and *The Purse*, were performed for the benefit of distressed seamen, and towards raising a fund “for the purpose of relieving the distresses of shipmasters, mates, and seamen, who are out of employ, and have families to support.” The managers, in unison with the wishes of the committee appointed for the above purpose, selected the comedy of *Fraternal Discord*. Harwood and Traits played the gouty captain and his trusty fellow-tar—almost as well as Hodgkinson and Jeffer-

son, their first representatives. The weather was extremely bad ; notwithstanding which there was 1177 dollars in the house, 777 dollars of which were acknowledged by the committee to have been received from the manager.

In October, 1808, Mr. Usher, whose name has occurred as a member of the Boston company, opened a theatre in Lexington, Kentucky, with *The Sailor's Daughter*, and *Ways and Means*, the characters performed by the "Thespian Society." The theatre is mentioned as superior to former accommodations of the kind : and it is said in the western journals, "The plan and decorations do credit to the judgment of the proprietor, Mr. Usher, as does the scenery, which competent judges pronounce equal to what is seen to the eastward." The "lovers of the drama," and the friends of morality, are congratulated upon this first attempt which has been made to introduce a theatre in the western country.

With the exception of the above, and the French theatre of New-Orleans, established in 1809, all the western theatres have sprung up since the period to which this volume is limited. Mr. James H. Caldwell, who is known as an actor of talent and skill, has raised theatres for the English drama in most of the western States.

The year 1808, was rendered remarkable in theatrical history, wherever the English language is spoken, by the death of Mrs. Anne Warren, in the thirty-eighth year of her age, and in the full possession of all those eminent qualifications which rendered her,

as a tragedian, only second to Mrs. Siddons. She died at Alexandria, on the 28th of June, 1808, having, contrary to the advice of her physicians, accompanied her husband on the southern tour required by his duties as actor and manager. As Mrs. Merry, she had been left in a foreign country a widow, and remained such four years, experiencing the friendship of the manager who engaged her to come to this country, and then became his wife: seven weeks after their marriage, Mr. Wignell died. She was a second time a widow; and became in due time the mother of a beautiful girl, who could know no natural father. Mr. Warren became the friend and protector of the widow and orphan. He had been the companion of herself and her first and second husband in the voyage from England. Between three and four years from the time Mr. Wignell died, she became Mrs. Warren, being married on the 15th of August, 1806, two years before her much-lamented death.

On the 2d of January, 1809, the play of *The Glory of Columbia, her Yeomanry*, cut and mangled, was performed. After an attempt at a Harlequin pantomime, in which the Harlequin, Columbine, and Pantaloon, were like any thing but the beings intended, the theatre was closed until the 22d of February, and on the 26th, Master Payne made his first appearance in character on any stage. This young gentleman was now sixteen years of age, and small for that age, looking still younger. His face was remarkably handsome, his countenance full of intelligence, and his

manners fascinating. He appeared on the stage with the consent of his father, who was behind the scenes during the performance, as was Mr. John E. Seaman, who had previously placed this young gentleman at the academy of Dr. Nott, at Schenectady. The friendship of Mr. Seaman, and the instructions of Dr. Nott, aided in developing those talents which have made of this gentleman one of the successful dramatists of the English and American stage. He performed Young Norval with credit, and his succeeding characters with an increased display of talent. The applause bestowed on his Norval was very great—boy actors were then a novelty, and we have seen none since that equalled Master Payne. A child playing in the same scene with men and women is in itself an absurdity, and the popularity of such exhibitions is a proof of vicious taste, or rather an absence of taste. It is the same feeling which carries the crowd to see monsters of every kind. A little boy, or a little girl, playing Richard or Shylock, where the other characters are supported by men and women, is to a person of taste an object of pity, or of ridicule. There was judgment in the choice of characters for Master Payne, which rendered his performances pleasing; Norval, Achmet, or even Romeo, might be tolerated in a boy of sixteen, and the beauty and talent of the young performer made these youthful characters as exhibited by him extremely pleasing. Master Payne made his debut in Boston on the 3d of April, in Norval.

The Forty Thieves was brought out with great success on the 20th of March, and on the 10th of

April, Mr. Cooper returned and was announced for ten nights, previous to his departure for Europe. He played, 1st, Beverley, (*Gamester* ;) 2d, Guiscard, (*Adelgitha* ;) 3d, Othello ; 4th, Duke Aranza, (*Honey Moon* ;) 5th, Macbeth ; 6th, Leon ; 7th, 8th and 9th, Charles, (in *Man and Wife* ;) 10th, Petruchio ; and 11th (his benefit,) Rolla.

On the 5th of May, 1809, the comedy of *Man and Wife* was first performed in America.

The *School for Authors*, by the late John Tobin, author of the *Honey Moon*, was performed, but without success.

On the 17th of May, 1809, Master Payne commenced a second engagement at New-York, for six nights, with Norval. He played in succession, Hastings, Octavian, Frederick Fribourg, Rolla, Edgar, and Hamlet for his benefit. The receipts averaged 500 dollars a night, exclusive of his benefit, which produced 755 dollars. Mr. Twaits played Lear on the 29th, with Master Payne's Edgar, and disappointed public expectation by playing it with great judgment. Few as his inches were, he did not look "every inch a king," still his personal appearance did not disqualify him for the feeble old man, and the heroic Edgar was as deficient in inches as the king.

In a publication, dated 1815, printed for John Miller, London, Mr. Payne is styled "the American Roscius." With us, in imitation of those who bestowed the title of "Young Roscius" on Master Betty, and every other theatrical imp who became the wonder of the day, Master Payne was entitled the "Young

American Roscius," not dreaming thereby to place him at the head of American actors. When we first knew John Howard Payne, he was a fascinating youth, and richly deserved, as a boy, the applause he met with in public, and the admiration his talents elicited in private. He was born in the city of New-York, the 9th of June, 1792, and his father removed with his family to Boston, while John was yet an infant, and there, under the parental roof, he received the rudiments of education. On some public occasion, as we are informed, he delivered an address from the stage, which probably planted in the boy his love for the drama. At the age of thirteen he was sent to New-York, and placed in the counting-house of Messrs. Grant and Bennet Forbes. His propensity for literature and the drama led him astray from journal and ledger, and he commenced a weekly paper, entitled, "The Thespian Mirror," which, as the production of a boy, justly excited admiration. William Coleman, the editor of the Evening Post, relates, in his paper of January 24th, 1806, the manner in which he became acquainted with Master Payne, as the editor of "The Thespian Mirror," and his surprise at finding in a boy of thirteen such strength and maturity of intellect. "I conversed with him for an hour; inquired into his history; the time since he came to reside in this city; and his object in setting on foot the publication in question. His answers were such as to dispel all doubts as to any imposition, and I found that it required an effort, on my part, to keep up the conver-

sation in as choice a style as his own." In short, Coleman pronounced the boy "a prodigy."

While at Schenectady with Dr. Nott, Master Payne published a second weekly paper, called, "The Pastime." As we have said, on the 26th of February, 1809, he made his first appearance on any stage, except the occasional address at Boston as a child.

During our second war against the then insolent and overbearing pretensions of Great Britain, young Mr. Payne left his country, and took up his abode in England.

On the 4th of June, 1813, he made a successful debut at Drury-lane theatre, being then twenty-one years of age, and was offered a permanent situation ; but the charms of starring were preferred, and finally literary pursuits, particularly those connected with the drama, withdrew him altogether from the profession of an actor. He played at the English provincial theatres, and in Ireland, with success, and everywhere received those tokens of esteem and admiration which his talents and manners entitled him to. We here insert a letter from a friend in London, recording a compliment paid by our old master, Benjamin West, to his young countryman.

" London, June 18th, 1813.

* * * " John Howard Payne, the young American Roscius, has played Douglas twice at Drury-lane, with unbounded applause. The house, however, was neither time crowded, but that may be attributed to his having kept his intention of playing as secret as pos-

sible, till the day of his appearance ; so that the English part of the audience, of course nearly the whole, had no idea who he really was. Some said he was from the provincial theatres, and others that he came from Ireland. They were taken by surprise, and delighted with him.

“ On the second night I had the honour of conducting Mr. West to see him. This was a great compliment to Payne, the old gentleman not having been at the theatre since the time of Garrick. He felt much interest for Payne, and was instrumental in procuring him his engagement. After the play, he said that our young Roscius had far exceeded his expectations. He thought his action extremely graceful, and his voice very fine ; his dress picturesque and correct, and perfectly adapted to his figure.

“ The next night he played Romeo, with Elliston’s Mercutio.”

During a part of the years 1826-7, Mr. Payne edited with great credit, in London, a periodical work, called “ The Opera Glass,” devoted to the drama.

Mr. Payne has recently returned from Europe. He has visited its continent, and contributed to the English and American stage several successful translations from French dramas. He has likewise produced a tragedy, which has been, and continues popular, *Brutus*. This is a combination from the plays which had preceded it on the same subject. How far his dramas of *Adeline*, *Charles Second*, *Clari*, *Therese*,

Love in Humble Life, &c., are translations or original, we know not. Many of his dramatic works have been, and continue very popular in England and America.

June 5th, the benefits commenced, but under auspices so discouraging, that seven only, including Mr. Holland the architect, ventured to put up their names. The result verified the anticipation. Twaits exceeded the expenses 100 dollars. Harwood merely defrayed them; and Holland was short 70 dollars. Tyler, Hogg, and Mrs. Lipman, a performer of some merit, who was before the public but a short time, by dint of the exertion of their friends, made out somewhat better; and Mrs. Oldmixon, through the same, though not equally direct, means, cleared about 80 dollars.

On the 21st, a new play, called *The Duke of Buckingham*, written by an English lady of the name of Ellis, was brought out. The house was very thin, and its reception by no means flattering. Its fate was most deserved.

June 28th, ticket night. On such nights the minor performers, door-keepers, &c., are allowed to dispose of as many tickets as they please, they paying the manager half the price of them.

July 4th, the theatre closed at New-York.

Many of our very excellent actors made their first appearance in America on the Boston theatre. This was the case with Mr. and Mrs. Duff. Mr. Duff was an actor in the Dublin theatre, at a time when Mrs. Jordan, and Mr. Dwyer, then in his prime, had a se-

rious dispute, which ended in his leaving the theatre, and giving Duff an opportunity to show talents before kept from view. He soon afterwards came to Boston, bringing with him a very beautiful lady, his wife, the sister of the first wife of the poet, Anacreon Moore. The sisters were dancers in Dublin, and their name Dyke. Mr. Duff appeared on the Philadelphia stage in 1811, playing the first night Macbeth, and Diddler. This is an instance of versatility of powers seldom met with, for in both he was eminently successful. The manager of that theatre at the time, tells us, "he succeeded beyond any instance I ever met with : for many months he attracted great houses in the *Three and the Deuce*, which I had performed as a first piece, Richard, Macbeth, Lear, &c. ; and I am safe in saying that Mr. Duff brought more *positive profit* to the house, in two years, than any *star* that visited us." It must be remembered that the *stars* took care to share the profit with the managers, except the greatest of all stars, George Frederick Cooke, and the profits of his performances were secured by those to whom he had bound himself. The Philadelphia manager, Mr. Wood, proceeds : "there was no one demanding all, or the largest share of the profits from us,—Mr. Duff had six guineas a week, and often played (on his sole attraction) to seven, eight, and 900 dollars. His second benefit here was 1574 dollars, which greatly exceeds any of Cook's, Kean's, or Matthews's. Mrs. Duff, at this time, was very pretty, but so tame and indolent as to give no hope of the improvement we afterwards wit-

nessed. Connected with Duff, I will mention an odd circumstance. James N. Barker, who had written several pieces before, and which had no fault but being American productions, at my request dramatized *Marmion*. I well knew the then prejudice against any native play, and concerted with Cooper a very innocent fraud upon the public—we insinuated that the piece was a London one—had it sent from New-York, exactly packed up like the pieces we were in the habit of receiving, and made it arrive in the middle of rehearsal, when it was opened with great gravity, and announced without any author alluded to. None of the company were in the secret—(I well knew ‘these actors cannot keep counsel’)—not even the prompter. Well, sir, it was played with great success for six or seven nights, when I (believing it safe) announced the author, and from that moment it ceased to attract. This is not a very creditable story, but a true one, and forms a strong contrast to the warmth with which *Metamora* and *The Gladiator* were received. Cooper also played *Marmion* in New-York, without a hint of its father.”

Of *Metamora* or *The Gladiator*, the writer cannot speak, but it is probable that the talents of the principal actor in these pieces have aided their authors, as is always the case, when one character is the sole object in a play. They have been eminently successful.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1809—Mr. and Mrs. Poe—Mr. and Mrs. Young—To Marry or not to Marry—Grieving's a Folly—Mrs. Mason—Her Widow Cheerly—Mr. Simpson—His Debut—His Early History—Engaged by Dr. Irving for New-York—Mr. Cooper's De Montfort—Foundling of the Forest—Venoni—Mr. Oliff, and other Prompters at New-York—Mr. Dwyer—His Debut and Early History—Mr. Cooper goes to England, 1810—Mr. Bray—Mr. Wood at New-York—Mr. and Mrs. Stanley—Arrival of Mr. Cooke.

On the 6th of September, 1809, the theatre of New-York was opened for the winter campaign with Lewis's *Castle Spectre*, and Bickerstaff's *Romp*. Mrs. Poe was the Angela and Priscilla Tomboy; Mr. Young, Osmond; and Mr. Poe, Hassan. Mr. and Mrs. Poe, Mr. Anderson, Miss Delamater, Miss Martin, (a daughter of John E. Martin, deceased,) and Miss White, were the additions to the company—a feeble company of recruits—to replace Harwood, Mr. and Mrs. Darley, and Mr. Hogg. It appears to have been the intention to open the theatre on the 30th August—"the favourable season, and unprecedented good health" of the city, say the managers, are their inducements—but then the great improvements could not be ready in time.

Mrs. Young was brought forward as Cowslip, on the third night of performance—but as Cowslip, she had only beauty to recommend her.

Mr. Cooper now went through his usual characters. Mrs. Twaits was the heroine of tragedy. Mr. Robinson played Cassio, and many other important parts, far beyond his abilities. Mr. Twaits played Michael Perez, and Mr. Young played Iago. The company was weak, but a reinforcement was crossing the seas, and soon arrived.

Mr. Foster, a brother of Mrs. Young, made his first appearance as Ganem, in *The Forty Thieves*, on the 15th of September.

As the year 1808 was rendered memorable in the history of the American theatre by the death of the accomplished lady and talented actress, Mrs. Anne Warren, so 1809 is little less entitled to the same distinction from the loss the stage sustained in the death of Mr. John E. Harwood, one of the best comedians the American theatre has possessed. On the 21st of September, in the 39th year of his age, this accomplished man and excellent actor expired at German-town.

On the 18th of November, in the same year, 1809, Mr. Giles Leonard Barrett died, at the age of 65. Mr. Barrett had been more successful in Boston where he made his first appearance on coming to America, than in any other metropolis, and he breathed his last in that city. He had considerable versatility. His figure must have been fine in early life, his face never. At a later period, Mr. Barrett would not

have been a prominent actor on the American boards. His son, Mr. George Barrett, is justly estimated as equal to any performer in the higher line of genteel comedy now among us.

In the same month of November, at Philadelphia, died Mr. Owen Morris, aged ninety. He played the old men of comedy for many years in the Old American Company, and afterwards in Wignell's Philadelphia Company. He had the appearance of a very old man in 1787, twenty-two years before his death. It is an error to suppose players are short-lived.

Actors, we mean good actors, and respectable men, are a long-lived race. A friend has remarked that he could recollect thirty actors, generally of high eminence, who died within the space of forty years, at or beyond the age of seventy : and adds, " it would be difficult to show as large a number out of the same proportion of merchants or traders." Macklin died more than 100 years of age ; we saw him act, with power and spirit his Shylock, and Sir Pertinax, at the age of 94 ; Mrs. Bracegirdle died at 85 ; Mr. Yates, 97 ; Mr. Blisset, the elder, 84 ; Colley Cibber, 86 ; and a very long list of names might be added of those who lived beyond the " threescore and ten " allotted to men in general who live to old age. There are now, or lately were living, in competency or affluence, many more who could be mentioned as proofs of longevity among actors. The improvidence of actors is another vulgar error. When we speak of actors, we do not mean message-carriers, or the candle-snuffers and dram-drinkers of the stage. Of the hundreds who

have retired from the stage in affluence, or with competency, or now live and act with the same advantage, we will only mention the names of Quin, Yates, Garrick, Smith, Cibber, Farren, Siddons, Matthews, Darley, Jefferson, Wood, Hull, Mattocks, Melmoth, Barry, Clive, Pritchard, Johnson, O'Neil, Bartley, Pope, Quick, Dodd, Bannister : we could fill our page with names who are honoured for their talents, and enjoy in private life the more estimable reward of esteem for their virtues. It is the lot of the historian of the stage to record vice and folly, and that record is remembered longer than the page which speaks of virtue—so the pages of the historian are filled with war and crime, and the years of peace passed over. Men's good deeds are written in sand—their evil ones on brass.

On the 9th of October, Mrs. Inchbald's comedy of *To Marry, or Not to Marry* was performed ; Lord Danbury by Mr. Twaits ; Sir Osborn Moreland, Mr. Cooper ; Willowear, Mr. Young ; Lavensworth, Mr. Robinson ; Amos, Mr. Poe ; Lady Susan Courtley, Mrs. Oldmixon ; Mrs. Sarah Moreland, Mrs. Hogg ; Hester, Mrs. Young. This comedy was played several nights in succession—that is, on play-nights.

On the 18th of October, the comedy of *Grieving's a Folly* was played with little success ; and on the 21st, the arrival of Mrs. Mason and Mr. Simpson was announced—a strong and very seasonable accession to the company. That evening the lady made her appearance in Mrs. Beverley. The choice was bad. Comedy was Mrs. Mason's forte, and a most

charming comedian she was. But we have ever remarked the predilection of those who have great talents in comedy for exhibiting themselves on stilts, and luxuriating in tears and sighs. The best of all gentlemen comedians, Lewis, began with tragedy—Bannister, the first of rich, not low, comedy players, made his attempt as a votary of Melpomene—these were men of ordinary height: but if the comedian is low in stature, the more violent is the propensity to seize the sceptre and the truncheon. Mrs. Mason did not want size, but she had no other requisite for tragedy, except good sense, which did not appear in the choice of Mrs. Beverley. Her second character was the Widow Cheerly, in Cherry's pleasant comedy of *The Soldier's Daughter*, and we never expect to see the part so well played again. She was from that time established as a first-rate comedy actress.

Mr. Simpson made his debut as Harry Dornton, in the fine comedy of *The Road to Ruin*. Mr. Cooper had played the part, and played it well, but Mr. Simpson's Harry Dornton was fully successful. On Mrs. Mason's second appearance, Mr. Simpson played Frank Heartall, and lost no favour with his audience.

Of Mr. Simpson's early history, all we know is from himself, in a very obliging answer to our inquiries; and we know no better mode of conveying the knowledge so obtained than by using his own words:—

“ I know not of any intelligence I can give you

respecting the American stage which you are not already acquainted with. I came here from Dublin in October, 1809, with Mrs. Mason in company, likewise engaged. I opened in Harry Dornton, &c., all of which you know. My early life has not been eventful, and therefore not to your purpose. I was born in 1784, educated for a mercantile life, but 'had a soul above buttons;' so I ran away, and took to the stage; opened first at a little village called Towcester, in May, 1806, in the Baron in *The Stranger*, and Fainwould in *Raising the Wind*. The theatre was a decent barn: salary, twenty shillings a week. My first interview with the manager was when he was mounted on a ladder, cleaning his lamp at the barn door. I stopped a very short time with him, and went to Buckingham, where we had the pleasure of playing in a larger stable,—I used to put my clothes in the manger while dressing. Now, having just started from home, and having a new blue coat and white breeches, I played all the walking gentlemen. I captivated the heart of a milliner in the town, who kept a very decent shop, and who offered to make me a sleeping partner; but it would not do. I then went to Dover, Margate, Brighton, and from thence to Dublin; from whence I arrived here, being engaged by Dr. Irving for Messrs. Price and Cooper. This is all that is material; I have had the usual difficulties of all country actors; but, unlike most of my brethren, I never wronged a man of a shilling, though I walked forty miles in one lamentable day without a shilling

in my pocket. I shall never forget the smell of some pork and cabbage at a cottage door by the way-side : I've loved pork and greens ever since.

“ I must not forget to tell you that my first *penchant* for the stage was encouraged by my revered friend, Thomas Hilson, who introduced me behind the scenes of a private theatre.”

It is to be lamented that a true and faithful account of this same revered friend does not fall within the limits of this our present History of the American Theatre.

Mr. Simpson's life, as an American, has not been one of the eventful kind ; and, although he has doubtless experienced the miseries of management, no man has borne the weight with better grace, or stood the wear and tear with less injury to health and equanimity. He has invariably yielded his rank to give an opportunity for the display of new talent ; and played second fiddle oftentimes when he was entitled to play first. He cannot be charged with the besetting sin of actor-managers, the seeking to thrust himself into every character that gave a chance of gaining applause or enhancing consequence. Happily for him, he has not had a Mrs. Simpson for whose caprice or ambition he would, perhaps, like other managers whose wives are heroines, been obliged to sacrifice justice and propriety ; but, still happier for him, he has had good sense to direct him as a manager, an actor, and a man ; and his reward is self-approbation and the esteem of his fellow-citizens.

Mr. Cooper, about this time, played De Montfort :

it did not succeed. Hodgkinson had failed in it. Cooper was better fitted for it, but it did not meet public expectation. Mrs. Twaits was not equal to Jane de Montfort. Mr. Young was as far from Rezenvelt as south from north—all failed. May we not see Forrest in De Montfort, Wood in Rezenvelt?—but where is Jane? Mrs. Duff is remembered as being nearest to the great Jane de Montfort.

On the 26th of November, *The Foundling of the Forest*, by Dimond, was first played, and had a great run. Mrs. Mason had her share in its success.

Venoni was played twice. Mr. Morrell, “a gentleman of this city,” played twice.

January 2d, 1810, *The Africans* had a run. O’Keefe’s *Fontainebleau* was several times played with success. We remember a circumstance connected with this play, when first performed in London, which shows how “they manage these things” t’other side of the Atlantic. Taking up a paper the day after we had witnessed Edwin’s performance of the Yorkshire Jockey, we read a eulogium on the same actor’s performance on that night, and in that of a Welshman. The author had made the alteration, and had not given notice to the editor.

On the 21st of January, 1810, Mr. Trazetta brought forth in the “great room of the City Hotel” a musical farce, written and set to music by himself. He was manager, author, composer, and performer. It is to be presumed that it made some noise at the time.

The theatre having been closed for the benefit of the managers, was re-opened on the 22d of February,

with *Gustavus Vasa*, a play thought appropriate for the birthday of Washington, and frequently, as such, brought forward. The hero was played by Mr. Robinson.

Miss Jones, now Mrs. Simpson, performed the interesting child in the popular play of *The Soldier's Daughter*, made popular by the acting of the gentleman now her husband, and of Mrs. Mason, in addition to its own merits.

In March, Master Payne played four or five nights, beginning very injudiciously with Rolla. A child in Rolla, let his mind be ever so Herculean, must be far below the mark. It is something like a little girl playing Shylock, with some horsehair tied to her chin.

That well-known character, Mr. Oloff, appears frequently in the bills this season ; he had before been on the stage—never heard—at least, never understood. He held the prompt-book at the P. S. entrance, and rung the bells for up and down curtain—up and down lamps—thunder, lightning, and fiddlers—gave the signals for the carpenters to storm with the crackling of tin sheets, or rolling of iron cannon-balls—and served for performers to storm at when they had neglected to be perfect in their parts : but for the purpose which gives name to the office, viz. prompting,—Mr. Oloff being prompter—for *giving the word*, the pillar behind which he was ensconced was just as efficient as Mr. Oloff. Mr. Cooper's maxim, in respect to a prompter (*after he became a manager*) was, that the more unintelligible he was in prompting, the

less the actors would rely on him, and the more on their own industry. Messrs. Hughes, Oliff, and M'Enery were perfect on Mr. Cooper's system ; they succeeded each other in the office : Hughes couldn't see the word, and the two Hibernians couldn't speak it. But let us go on to a greater Hibernian.

Mr. Dwyer made his appearance on the stage of America, in New-York, the 14th day of March, 1810. He played, judiciously, his best character, Belcour, in *The West Indian*, and was much admired : it was repeated. He then played in succession, Gossamer, Charles Surface, Goldfinch, Ranger, Archer, Octavian, (a vile failure), Sir Charles Rackett, Captain Absolute, Rover, Vapid, Tangent, and Mercutio. Most of these he was well studied in, and had played them at Drury-lane ; for Mr. Dwyer had been kept up at Drury-lane for three winters, as the successor of John Palmer.

Mr. Dwyer is an actor of too much notoriety to be passed over slightly. His biographer, in *The Mirror of Taste*, tells us that he is descended from the O'Dwyers of Tipperary, and that his father was the best fencer of the age ; that our hero ran away, as most of our heroes do, to avoid study or work, and at seventeen commenced player in Dublin ; that " with a degree of success never contemplated by himself, Mr. Dwyer played in many of the principal provincial theatres of England until the year 1802 ; when, on the first of May, in that year, he appeared in the character of Belcour (*West Indian*) at Drury-lane."

Of his success, for a time, we have spoken. He

was a very handsome fellow, and his success was never marred by his diffidence. Mr. Dwyer was above all the vulgar prejudices of mankind, and much better suited to the aristocracy of Europe than the plebeian society of America.

After leaving Drury-lane "in disgust," and playing a few nights, as we find it recorded, "at great prices, in most of the cities and towns of Great Britain," Mr. Dwyer "determined on a trip across the Atlantic." He played at Boston and Philadelphia, and for a time with success wherever he came.

The Emerald Isle is so rich in talent, and can boast of such a long line of splendid statesmen, soldiers, orators, and artists, that she will not feel that we have diminished her glories by denying a crown to the head of the descendant of the O'Dwyers of Tipperary. We take this opportunity to remark, that the success of Irishmen, as dramatists and actors, has been surprisingly great. Writing from recollection, and at random, we put down the names of Sheridan, Macklin, Wilkes, Moody, Johnstone, Kelly, Pope, Murphy, Farquhar, Dogget, Henry, Ryder, Quin, Bickerstaff, O'Neil, Barry, Rock : we need not look into our books for more ; the eloquence of Ireland is proverbial, and her sons have exhibited a due portion of it on the stage. Let it not be inferred, from what we have said, that Mr. Dwyer was destitute of talent ; far from it ; but it was not of the first order, nor had it received the best cultivation.

Mr. Cooper returned in April from blazing abroad as a star, and "is engaged" (according to the adver-

tisement) after the manner of any other performer, for a certain number of nights. Two of these nights the two stars shone together: Cooper, Horatio, Dwyer, Lothario—Cooper, Leon; Dwyer, Michael Perez. Mr. Dwyer then proceeded to Philadelphia to make the luminaries of that company “hide their diminished heads.”

The theatre of New-York was shut from the 18th to the 27th of April, when it was re-opened with the play of *The Exiles*. On the 16th of May, the new comedy of *Riches* was performed; and on the 21st, it was announced, that “Mr. Cooper, being about to sail for England, his engagement will terminate in eight nights.” He then played Richard, Hamlet, Coriolanus, Lear, Alexander, Orsino, Othello, and Duke Aranza, in *The Honey-moon*. Mr. Cooper having departed, the benefits commenced the 15th of June, and the theatre closed immediately after the 4th of July.

On the 10th of September, 1810, the theatre of New-York re-opened, Mr. Cooper being then in England. Mr. and Mrs. Claude and Mr. Bray were added to the company. Mr. Bray was a man of good sense, good manners, and a valuable comedian. The opening play was *She Stoops to Conquer*. Mr. Wood, the manager of the Philadelphia theatre, “shot,” we will not say “wildly, from his sphere,” and became the centre of light in the rival house. He was announced for four nights, and played five, (as usual,) the last for his benefit. He was received, as he merited, with welcome and applause: first in

Count de Valmont, (*Foundling of the Forest*,) a part he had at home gained great reputation in ; second night, Don Felix, in *The Wonder* ; third, Penraddock ; fourth, Rolla ; and for his benefit, *The Foundling* was repeated. Mr. Wood's engagement commenced on the 12th of September, and on the 28th, two recruits, enlisted by Mr. Cooper, who was now playing Serjeant Kite, arrived to keep up the attention of the public. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley were announced in due form, and she made her *debut* in Adelgitha. On the 30th, they both played,—he Sir Anthony Absolute in Sheridan's *Rivals*,—she, Julia. Mr. Stanley was deaf, and Mrs. Stanley did not prove an equal to her predecessors or contemporaries. To be deaf is only a misfortune in the man, but it is a fault in the player. It is in vain that he has a just conception of character, and is fraught with the spirit as well as words of his author : he must hear the *cue* and the prompter. He knows that the person he is making love to, or quarrelling with, ought to say certain words to which he is to answer ; but players are not infallible, though popes are, and it may happen that a game of cross-purposes and silly answers may ensue.

Fennell was called in as an auxiliary for six nights ; but he was soon sick—not before the public sickened. The theatre was in a decline ; when lo ! George Frederick Cooke arrived, and all was well again.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

A short Chapter of additional Autobiography.

IN my memoirs of George Frederick Cooke, it will be seen that I was connected with the theatre of New-York during the year 1810 and part of 1811.

In 1812, I resumed the pencil, many years neglected; and was again, in 1813, called from the palette and easel by an unsolicited and very unexpected appointment as assistant paymaster-general to the militia of the state of New-York, then in the service of the United States. This appointment was made by Daniel D. Tompkins, governor of the state, and commander-in-chief of the third military district; and was conferred upon me in a manner which beyond measure enhanced the value of the office. Happily the war terminated triumphantly, but my services were required until 1816.

During an absence from the city of New-York, on duty, in the western part of the state, in 1815, I was informed that my name was joined with that of my friend John Joseph Holland, as the intended managers of the New-York theatre; and soon after I received a request from John K. Beekman, Esq. (who had called

at my house repeatedly to see me,) that I would, immediately on my return, call on John Jacob Astor, Esq. if Mr. Beekman should be absent.

On my return to New-York, I accordingly called on Mr. Astor, and told him that I did so in compliance with Mr. Beekman's wishes. He took me into a private cabinet, and mentioned certain negotiations then pending for a renewed lease of the theatre. I repeated that my only motive for calling was the expressed desire of his partner in the property. He again mentioned that Messrs. Price and Simpson were in treaty with him, and asked if I had any proposal to make. I answered, "No," and took my leave. As I was retiring, he asked me to call again. I replied, "If you have any communication to make to me, you know my place of residence ;" and without any further explanation I departed. As I left his counting-house, I saw Mr. Simpson go to his dwelling-house, and heard shortly after that the gentlemen holding the lease had renewed it. I have been assured that my name was not used to further or hasten the agreement. I only know that I had no further connexion or agency in the business than above stated, although as free to bid for the lease as any other person ; but I was without thought or desire of the kind.

Again : being in Norfolk, in the year 1821, engaged professionally, and enjoying the friendship of many in that region of hospitality, particularly that of Thomas Williamson, Esq., who had erected a building for my painting and pictures, I received a letter

from Mr. Beekman, suggesting an engagement to conduct the New-York theatre on the account and risk of the proprietors, and an immediate voyage to England on the business. I notified my willingness to enter into a negotiation for such purpose. This was on the 27th of April. I received an answer, dated May 5th, saying that Mr. Simpson had that day concluded his agreement for the theatre.

How far, without my knowledge or intention, I have been made to influence the contracts of others, I know not. The facts above stated appear to belong to my theatrical history, and as such I record them.

It will be seen by the catalogue of American plays, that I wrote and translated some pieces for the Bowery theatre. This was at the request of the managers, and in the plain way of trade, receiving meagre compensation for poor commodities. *Thirty Years, or The Life of a Gamester*, was faithfully translated from the French, and was generally well played. Mr. George Barrett represented the hero skilfully, and Mrs. Giffert (above mentioned as Miss Holman) played the heroine with great pathos. Mrs. G. Barrett added her talents and beauty, both of a high order, to the strength which gave success to the piece.

The last piece I wrote for the stage was a farce, called *A Trip to Niagara*, the main intention of which was to display scenery.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Present State of the English Stage—Plan of and Wish for Reform.

WE have spoken of the state of the English drama in the year 1752, when William Hallam sent off a colony, led by his brother, to settle in the North American wilderness; when Garrick directed the stage of the metropolis, and Johnson and Goldsmith, and their associates, wrote for it; when the pit was the centre of wit and learning, and the boxes of taste and elegance.

We have noticed slightly the London theatre of 1787,—when Sheridan was the manager of Drury-lane, Harris of Covent Garden, and Colman of the Haymarket,—when Henderson and Lewis, Mrs. Billington, Mrs. Martyr, Mrs. Mattocks, Mrs. Abington, Miss Brunton, with Farren, Irish Johnstone, Pope, Holman, Macklin, Edwin, Quick, Wilson, and their inferiors, enlivened the stage of one house; and Smith, Bensley, Kemble, two Bannisters, Mrs. Siddons, Miss Farren, Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. Crouch, Palmer, Dodd, Parsons, Suett, and King, with their followers, shone on the boards of the other,—when the *élite* of both houses joined at the minor theatre to

sport the wit of Foote and his successors, in warm weather, making the little theatre in the Haymarket the seat of the Comic Muse,—when Sheridan, Burgoyne, and Colman wrote comedies, and O’Keefe farces,—when wit yet lingered in the pit, and beauty and taste in the boxes;—and we now will take a glance at the drama of Great Britain in 1832.

A flippant and (though scurrilous) amusing writer in *Fraser’s Magazine*, under the head of “Sock and Buskin,” will serve our turn for a text-book, and our commentaries shall be brief.

“It is long,” he says, “since we have said a word about these poor rogues; like the rest of the world now-a-days, we think very little of them: we seldom see them at the theatres, and never meet with them elsewhere: it was once otherwise: we adored the princesses, and affected the company of Doricourt and Hamlet. In fact, we knew them in every walk, and every degree, from the haughty star, that to vulgar eyes shone afar off in the distant heavens, a glory and a mystery, to the no less haughty farthing-candle that twinkled, an idol and an oracle to the Zoroasters of the pot-house.”

He goes on to say, that they are “bad acquaintance,”—“worse, by Jupiter! than marching officers.” “No player (not even Garrick) ever was a gentleman.” “Take a player from the first—the *debut*—how is it that any creature who has ever known a decent hearth, the care of parents, the respect of men, can stand with a painted face and antic dress to mimic human passions and human actions,—exposed

to the gaze of a thousand eyes, the curling of a thousand lips, the scorn of every purse-proud, idle block-head, the mercy of every ruffian who chooses to pay sixpence for the privilege to hiss? And, above all, how is it that a woman can do this?"

The writer's definition of the word gentleman appears to be, one whose "demeanour" evinces good-breeding by "unconsciousness of restraint, and that perfect ease which must be its result." Now, we have known English actors who, according to this idea of a gentleman, were fitted for the society of the writer of the Sock and Buskin." But, according to his definition, we Yankees have no gentlemen among us; and Heaven grant that we never may! Our citizens are ever under restraint,—the restraint of law, of religion, of morality—of the ties and cares imposed by their political and social duties, and by those connected with the avocations of business,—for we are a busy people,—and, having no hereditary gentlemen, no laws of primogeniture, are likely to continue so. It is true, an actor is under restraint, and, to be a good actor, must attend sedulously to his avocations; and so must the priest and the lawyer, the judge and the bishop; the painter and the sculptor, the merchant and the banker, and the many who think themselves gentlemen in our republican society.

Actors and actresses paint their faces, and put on mimic dresses and actions. The princes, dukes, and lords of Europe, with their ladies, and the gentlemen who are proud to be called their grooms, and

pages, and chamberlains, do the same (without aiming at the same, or an equally moral purpose) in their midnight orgies, where, indeed, the end is vicious dissipation, licentious intrigue, or ostentatious display of arrogance and vanity. This actor, as an artist, puts on the appearance of a picture, which the poet had already painted in words, to the intellectual eye; but which the player happily illustrates by action, emphasis, and semblance of passion. The purpose of both poet and player is to present a picture fraught with instruction: there is no moral degradation in the act or the purpose. The European gentleman and lady, duke and duchess, prince and princess (and with grief we add their servile imitators in this country), cover their faces with painted pasteboard, and deck themselves in robes, to mimic historic or poetic characters, with purposes in view which, if not evil, cannot be good.

We are not the advocates of abuse of any kind. It is our aim and purpose to point out that which needs correction. It is only by the abuse of the theatre that the actor is "exposed to the curling of a thousand lips, the scorn of every purse-proud, idle blockhead, the mercy of every ruffian who chooses to pay sixpence for the privilege to hiss."

Were the theatre under the protection of the state, as in France, or of a powerful association of men, not seeking emolument from it,—under the direction of a learned and good man, of refinement, taste, and experience in the fine arts, who should have no pecuniary interest therein, further than the liberal income

furnished by the state or the association ; were the actors chosen for talents, in union with moral excellence, and made independent of popular favour for other reward than that of public esteem, they would not be doomed

to rehearse,
Day after day, poor scraps of prose and verse—

for then a Göthe, or a Johnson, (men who could write the most sublime plays, or in the triumphant strains of true poetry, sing,

When *Learning's* triumph o'er her barbarous foes,
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose ;

such men,) would select the “ prose and verse ;” and the most skilful *histrionics* would guide the rehearsal of it. “ The purse-proud, idle blockhead,” and the “ ruffian,” would not dare to insult the director, or the poet, or the artist who gave life, motion, and reality to the effusions of the poet, or to annoy those who listened to them ; and even the gentleman (according to “ Sock and Buskin's” notion of a gentleman)—the man who is without restraint in the company of other free and easy persons of the same description, would be awed into decorous attention. Is this an imaginary picture ? It has been a reality—we presume is still so—in Germany—and it is by such a theatre, so supported, so directed, and so conducted, that Weimar has acquired the title of *The Athens* of modern Europe.

It was the triumph of learning “ o'er her barba-

rous foes" that "reared the stage." If those "barbarous foes" succeed in their attempts to overthrow the fabric, it will be in consequence of weakness in the tenants of the structure, and not from any inherent defect in the building itself. The strongest tower which the wit of man can devise to resist barbarism and ignorance, even the omnipotent press itself, may be overthrown, if the efforts of those who assault, are seconded by the introduction of abuses, the traitors who undermine the walls, or open the gates to the enemy.

Let us return to the present state of the English theatres, so intimately connected with the welfare of the American.

"The large theatres," says this lively writer, "are proceeding to perdition as fast as any saint in England can desire." "At Drury-lane there have been the wild beasts and Mrs. Wood. It was a silly thing to turn the theatre into a *menagerie*." He represents Mrs. Wood and others, on the great theatres, as poor or indifferent, but pleasing the kind of people who attend them. The smaller theatres are represented as in every respect the best and most prosperous. "Jack Reeve," Madame Vestris, and Liston, are praised; and the Haymarket and Adelphi said to be prosperous. *Victorine*, a piece from the French, is eulogized, with Mrs. Yates, the principal player in it. Then we are told, that "all the pantomimes have failed," and that "the solicitors of the patentees have issued a notice to all the managers and performers of the minor theatres, declaring their intention to prosecute every

body ' who shall either act in, or cause to be acted, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts therein, without the authority or license mentioned in the act of 10 Geo. 2, c. 28.' The men of the minors, seeing that their very existence was aimed at by this act, held a meeting on Christmas-eve, for the purpose of considering how they could best defend themselves against these dramatic Burkers." During this meeting we find it asserted that " Covent Garden seemed sunk so low, that he," the speaker, " did not deem it worthy of mention ; but at Drury-lane the poetry of the drama was reduced to Hyder Ali, the energy to an emaciated lion, and the force to a half-starved tigress."

The writer next notices an evil long existing, the employing for the manufacture of plays " dramatic *littérateurs*. We speak not of authors ; for none, under the present system of theatrical management, could exist."

These notices and extracts may give the reader an idea of the present state of the theatre in Great Britain. A plan of reform has been announced. Reform is the fashion of the day, reform is needed, and we wish success to reformers, both of the stage and the state.

Having given this portrait of the English drama in its present state, by an English writer, let us see how the original appears in the eyes of a European foreigner, one used to the stage representation and theatrical etiquette of France and Germany. " The most striking thing to a foreigner in English theatres,"

says a German prince, " is the unheard-of coarseness and brutality of the audiences." " It is not uncommon, in the midst of the most affecting part of a tragedy, or the most charming 'cadenza' of a singer, to hear some coarse expression shouted from the galleries in stentor voice. This is followed, according to the state of the bystanders, either by loud laughter and approbation, or by the castigation and expulsion of the offender," and in either case you lose what is passing on the stage. He proceeds, " it is also no rarity for some one to throw the fragments of his *goute*, which does not always consist of orange-peel alone, without the smallest ceremony, on the heads of the people in the pit, or to shale them, with singular dexterity, into the boxes ; while others hang their coats and waist-coats over the railing of the gallery, and sit in their shirt-sleeves." " Another cause for the absence of respectable families is the resort of hundreds of those unhappy women with whom London swarms. Between the acts, they fill the large and handsome *foyers*, and exhibit their boundless effrontery in the most revolting manner." " The evil goes to such an extent, that in the theatres it is often difficult to keep off these repulsive beings, especially when they are drunk, which is not seldom the case. They beg in the most shameless manner, and a pretty, elegantly dressed girl does not disdain to take a shilling or a sixpence, which she instantly spends in a glass of rum, like the meanest beggar. And these are the scenes, I repeat, which are exhibited in the national theatre of England." " Is not this—to say nothing of the immorality—in the

highest degree low and undignified? It is wholly *inconsistent with any real love of art, or conception of its office and dignity.*" This portrait is undoubtedly true, and it is more than time that a radical remedy should be found, otherwise a line must be drawn between the friends of the drama and the friends of the play-house. It must not be suffered that while the theatre is giving the lessons of morality from its stage, the play-house saloons and upper boxes and lobbies are such as above described.

How different is all this from the appearance which presents itself to the eye in the theatres of France and Germany—of every part of the world, where the influence of English refinement and taste in amusement is not imitated!

It appears, however, that in France, as well as England, the minor theatres take the lead in popularity and fashion. The most prolific and successful dramatists of Paris have devoted their time and talents to the *vaudeville* or *petite comédie*, and other productions, distinct from the legitimate tragedy and comedy of good old times—legitimacy is out of fashion, even at the theatre. Another innovation has taken place in this age of innovation. Instead of a poet being employed in deep research and study, for months or years, to produce a poem of profound thought, and solid as well as bright materials, two, three, or more men of the present day will form a copartnership, such as formerly subsisted between Beaumont and Fletcher in England, but driving an infinitely brisker trade, and they will manufacture dramatic pieces on

any subject which circumstance or the manager may demand, with the rapidity that attends all sublunary transactions in these degenerate days.

But what is most extraordinary, these French manufacturers produce wares of a very superior quality, at least in comparison with their English neighbours, and supply not only the Parisian, but the London and American market. These plays or farces generally pass through the London theatres before they are presented to us. *Trente Ans, ou la Vie d'un Joueur*, one of these company-wrought productions was done into English by the writer, at the request of the managers of Bowery theatre, who were justly dissatisfied with the garbled English play, called *The Gamblers' Fate*, from the same original. This play, and a subsequent piece called *Avant, Pendant, et Après*, exhibit the same dramatic characters at different and distant periods of time, and by that means produce that variety and rapidity which seems to be the taste of the day.

Mons. Eugene Scribe and his Collaborateurs pour out comedy, opera, farce, or pieces uniting the three, and a spice of tragedy into the bargain, and all full of interest, wit, incident—in short, delightful performances. He has published eight vols. octavo, entitled “Théâtre d'Eugène Scribe,” and dedicated them to his Collaborateurs, Messrs. Deletre, Desnoyers, Delavigne, &c. &c. The English dramas of *The White Phantom*, *The Happiest Day of my Life*, and many others, are from the workshop of Scribe and Co.

In our projects for a reformed theatre, we have

spoken of the plans adopted in Germany. We have instanced Weimar, where Göthe was the director. We have noticed Berlin, where Iffland, one of the best dramatists as well as actors, was the manager. At Hamburgh, Schröder long directed the stage, and was its ornament both as a player and writer. Schröder wrote several original pieces, but was so much attached to the older English plays, that he devoted much time to their translation, and delighted to act the characters which Shakspeare, Congreve, Farquhar, and Sheridan, had portrayed. At Vienna, where the theatre is, as it ought to be, supported by the government, the direction was, and probably is, in a committee of five performers, selected for their talents and literature. These directors were accountable to the government for the pieces represented. One of the five directors attended during the performance of every evening, in full dress, and announced the succeeding night's entertainment, it being his duty to address the audience when any occasion called for it.

The expenses of a theatre, governed by the State, or by an enlightened and patriotic association, would be defrayed by the visitors—but profit should not be the object—loss should not be feared. Men of learning and belles-lettres scholars would be the directors and writers—they would be made independent. Actors who are artists and scholars would be the performers—equally made independent. Every abuse would vanish. The theatre would be the temple of the Muses, the Graces, and the Virtues.

In Germany, the theatre, being under the direction of despots, or of their privileged aristocratic minions, may be used as an engine to support the abuses of the state which protects and guides it. Not so here. It would only be used, if used as a political engine, for purposes congenial to our republican institutions.

With the rulers of Germany the opera ranks as high as the drama. We, however, only write of the theatre as the home of Melpomene and Thalia, and view the sister, Euterpe, as a favoured guest in the household where they preside. Let music have a temple of her own; but when in unison with the drama, music and painting are only to be considered as accessories.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Charleston Theatre—Solee—Williamson—Placide—Copartnership of Placide, Greene, and Twaits—Destruction of the Richmond Theatre and the dissolution of the Charleston management of that period—Mr. Caldwell, and Theatres of Western States.

It will be remembered that David Douglas, the second manager of the Old American Company, built a theatre in Charleston, in the year 1773. Near the conclusion of our fifth chapter we have mentioned, as an event in chronological order, that a merchant of Charleston, and Mr. Goodwin, a comedian, erected a building called Harmony Hall, in that city, for theatrical and other amusements, in 1786. We have reason to believe that this is the same building now used as a theatre, and standing in Church-street, near Broad-street. This is the second theatre in that city; the first being that which was built by David Douglas in 1773, as above mentioned. We will devote this chapter principally to such facts as we can collect and recollect, connected with the drama of South Carolina.

The place first called Harmony Hall came after-

wards to be known as *Solee's Long Room*. We have had occasion to mention Mr. Solee as a manager at Boston and New-York. He was probably better fitted for his earliest management, as the entertainments first directed by him were in the French language, and he may have known something of French literature.

The company which Mr. Solee carried to Charleston in 1797 was very strong, and probably far superior to any that had exhibited in the Long Room theatre before. Mr. and Mrs. Williamson were leaders, the first in tragedy and second-rate comedy, the second in romps; Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock were equally leaders, the first in fathers, and the second as the representative of the tragic muse; Chalmers was first gentleman comedian, and Mr. Hughes the low comedian; Mr. and Mrs. Jones added strength to the corps; Miss Broadhurst was the opera lady; the singing man was Chalmers's *inseparable*, Williamson the second; Mr. and Mrs. Cleaveland were the walking gentleman and lady, and *both* young, handsome, and equal to their lines; Mr. and Mrs. Placide were powerful, the first in dance and pantomime, the second as an actress and singer; Mr. M'Kinzie was an improving second actor in tragedy or comedy. Of Mr. Downie, Mrs. Hughes, and Mr. and Mrs. Rowson, who filled the list, we cannot speak from knowledge.

Mr. Williamson, who stands at the head of this list, succeeded Solee in management, and died in 1802. After the death of Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, the Charleston theatre was taken by Mr. Placide. His

children, the oldest, Miss Caroline Placide, afterwards Mrs. Waring, was born in April, 1798, and Henry, the present excellent comedian, was born in September, 1799. These, and the younger boys and girls, as they could be made useful in dances and pantomimes, were trained to the stage, and have been its ornaments and support.

After a time, Mr. William Greene, mentioned as one of the great Chestnut-street company, joined Mr. Placide in the management at Charleston, and played the first line of business. Robinson, familiarly called Hop Robinson, who had descended from the shop-board of the Park theatre to the stage, and exchanged the thimble and needle for the sword and truncheon, was Greene's second in the buskin. His success, though not great, proved that he had merit. Mat. Sully was the principal low comedian for years. Mr. and Mrs. Claude, Mr. and Mrs. Young, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke, with Messrs. Caulfield, Burke, Anderson, Sandford, Huntington, and Mesdames Greene, Placide, Poe, and others, occasionally changing, made the Charleston theatre rich in efficient performers.

When Mr. Placide, in 1803, engaged Mr. Hodgkinson for the Charleston theatre, he absorbed all the attention which had previously been diffused among many. Mr. and Mrs. Whitlock had again returned to Charleston, and to her Angela Mr. Hodgkinson played Osmond, as his opening part. When this was succeeded by Shely, and a long list of characters not only dissimilar, but opposite, which he performed with such uncommon powers, he gained that favour

and admiration which was justly his due on the stage. In the winter of 1803-4 he played in Charleston upwards of eighty different characters. Seven of these were from the pen of the writer of this work, who will remark, *en passant*, that when he played Captain Bertram, the play was advertised by the title of *Fraternal Discord in England*, to make it appear as an English production, although the whole dialogue indicates Germany as the scene of the action.

In the winter of 1804-5, Mr. Hodgkinson was again the great attraction of the Charleston theatre, which he left in the summer of 1805, and died in the autumn of the same, at Washington, as above recorded.

When Twaits, after his unfortunate quarrel with Captain Smith, and the subsequent disagreement with the managers of the Park theatre, joined himself to the southern company, he was justly, for a time, the favourite actor. The management was now in the hands of three directors — Messrs. Placide, Greene, and Twaits. They occasionally divided their company, and occupied, with the Charleston theatre, the theatres of Norfolk and Richmond.

This company was broken up in consequence of an astounding calamity which seemed to shake the American theatre for a time to its foundation. This was the destruction by fire of the Richmond house, during the time of performance, and the loss of upwards of seventy persons, burned, or crushed to death, in the course of a few minutes. It is a curious circumstance that Cooke, who never played either at Charleston or

Richmond, was the remote cause of this conflagration, and the ruin of the Charleston company.

The divisions of the corps of Messrs. Placide, Greene, and Twaits, had been united at Richmond, in the autumn of 1811, preparatory to embarking for their winter-quarters in Charleston. But it was known that if they could carry the great George Frederick Cooke with them, even in his shattered condition, their season must be uncommonly productive. The calculation was good. Cooke, removed to a new theatre of action, so very dissimilar from either England or the northern states, would have thrown off his damning vice for a time, exerted a renewed energy, and enjoyed renewed health. He would have been idolized by the hospitable south, and he would have refrained, for the poor object of attaining applause as a player, from that which the great object of health, self-approbation, and universal esteem, could not cause him to eschew—he would have made—that was the the object of the managers—an overflowing treasury.

Mr. Placide had negotiated an engagement with the veteran, and had left a carriage in waiting for him at New-York to transport him to Richmond: there to play a few nights previously to embarking. But Mr. Cooke was sick—or did not choose to move. This caused the delay of the company at Richmond, and the keeping open of the theatre until the night of the fatal 26th of December, 1811.

A new play and pantomime had been advertised for the benefit of Mr. Placide. The house was fuller than on any night of the season. The play was over,

and the first act of the pantomime had passed. The second and last had begun. All was yet gaiety, all so far had been pleasure, curiosity was yet alive, and further gratification anticipated—the orchestra sent forth its sounds of harmony and joy—when the audience perceived some confusion on the stage, and presently a shower of sparks falling from above. Some were startled, others thought it was a part of the scenic exhibition. A performer on the stage received a portion of the burning materials from on high, and it was perceived that others were tearing down the scenery. Some one cried out from the stage that there was no danger. Immediately afterwards, Hopkins Robinson ran forward and cried out, “The house is on fire!” pointing to the ceiling, where the flames were spreading like wild-fire. In a moment, all was appalling horror and distress. Robinson handed several persons from the boxes to the stage, as a ready way for their escape. The cry of “Fire! fire!” ran through the house, mingled with the wailings of females and children. The general rush was to gain the lobbies. It appears from the following description of the house and the scene that ensued, that this was the cause of the great loss of life.

The general entrance to the pit and boxes was through a door not more than large enough to admit three persons abreast. This outer entrance was within a trifling distance of the pit door, and gave an easy escape to those in that part of the house. But to attain the boxes from the street it was necessary to descend into a long passage, and ascend again by an

angular staircase. The gallery had a distinct entrance, and its occupants escaped. The suffering and death fell on the occupants of the boxes, who, panic-struck, did not see that the pit was immediately left vacant, but pressed on to gain the crowded and tortuous way by which they had entered. The pit door, as we have said, was so near the general entrance, that those who occupied that portion of the house gained the street with ease. A gentleman who escaped from the pit among the last, saw it empty, and, when in the street, looked back upon the general entrance to the pit and boxes, and the door had not yet been reached by those from the lobbies. A gentleman and lady were saved by being thrown accidentally into the pit, and most of those who perished would have escaped if they had leaped from the boxes and sought that avenue to the street. But all darted to the lobbies. The stairways were blocked up. All was enveloped in hot scorching smoke and flame. The lights were extinguished by the black and smothering vapour, and the shrieks of despair were appalling. Happy for a moment were those who gained a window and inhaled the air of heaven. Those who had reached the street cried to the sufferers at the windows to leap down, and stretched out their arms to save them. Some were seen struggling to gain the apertures to inhale the fresh air. Men, women, and children precipitated themselves from the first and second stories. Some escaped unhurt—others were killed or mangled by the fall. Some with their clothes on fire, shrieking,

leaped from the windows to gain a short reprieve and die in agonies.

“Who can picture,” says a correspondent of *The Mirror*, “the distress of those who, unable to gain the windows, or afraid to leap from them, were pent up in the long narrow passages?” The cries of those who reached the upper windows are described as being heart-sickening. Many who found their way to the street were so scorched or burnt as to die in consequence, and some were crushed to death under foot after reaching the outer door.

Add to this mass of suffering, the feelings of those who knew that they had relatives or friends who had gone to the house that night. Such rushed half-frantic to the spot with the crowds of citizens from all quarters—while the tolling bells sounded the knell of death to the heart of the father or mother whose child had been permitted to visit the theatre on that night of horror.

“As my father was leading me home,” said Mr. Henry Placide, “we saw Mr. Greene, exhausted by previous exertion, leaning on a fence, and looking at the scene of ruin. For all was now one black mass of smoking destruction. ‘Thank God!’ ejaculated Greene, ‘Thank God! I prohibited Nancy from coming to the house to-night! She is safe!’” Nancy was his only daughter, just springing into womanhood still at the boarding-school of Mrs. Gibson; and as beautiful and lovely a girl as imagination can picture. Mrs. Gibson and the boarders had made up a party

for the theatre that evening, and Nancy Greene asked her father's permission to accompany them. He refused—but unfortunately added his reason—"The house will be crowded, and you will occupy a seat that would otherwise be paid for." On these words hung the fate of youth, innocence, and beauty. "I will pay for your ticket," said the kind instructress, "we will not leave you behind." The teacher and the pupil were buried in the ruins on which the father gazed, and over which he returned thanks for the safety of his child. He went home and learned the truth.

An instance of the escape of a family is given. The husband, with three children, were in the second boxes; his wife, with a female friend, in another part of the house. The wife gained a window—leaped out, and escaped unhurt. Her friend followed and was killed. The father clasped two helpless girls to his breast, and left a boy of twelve years of age to follow—the boy was forced from the father, and to a window—sprang out and was safe. The parent, with his precious charge, followed the stairway, pressed upon by those behind him, and those who mounted on the heads and shoulders of the crowd before them—he became unconscious, but was still borne along—he was taken up, carried to his bed, and opened his eyes to see all his family safe.

On the contrary, Lieut. Gibbon, of the Navy, as exemplary in private life as heroic in the service of his country, and on the point of being united with Miss Conyers, the pride of Richmond for every ac-


complishment and virtue, was swept into eternity while exerting himself to do all that man should do in such trying circumstances. He was with his mother at the theatre, and carried her to a place of safety—then rushed back to save her in whose fate his own was bound up—he caught her in his arms and had borne her partly down the staircase, when the steps gave way, and they were precipitated into the flames.

Friday, the 27th of December, 1811, was a day of mourning to Richmond. The banks and stores were closed. A law was passed prohibiting amusements of every kind for four months. A day was set apart for humiliation and prayer. A monument was resolved on—to be erected to the memory of the dead and the event.

George Frederick Cooke did not come on to Richmond, and the Thespians embarked for Charleston. They were shipwrecked, and lost, by water, most of the property that the fire had spared. In short, the company was broken up by the blow received at Richmond. Placide, Greene, and Twaits, passed away in a few short months, or years, after the dreadful night of the 26th of December.

Of the theatres in Broadway and Anthony-street, under the direction of Messrs. Holland and Twaits, or of the theatrical commonwealth, it is not within our province to speak in this work.

In his last illness, Mr. Twaits was attended by Dr. McLean, who requested Drs. Mott and H. U. Onderdonk to assist in an examination of the corpse, the day after death. Mr. Twaits had laboured under



a very severe asthmatic affection. We insert an extract from the publication of these gentlemen, as it seems to prove that powerful and effective exertions of the voice, both in speaking and singing, can be made, when the organs which we suppose necessary to both are nearly obliterated. Those who remember Mr. Twaits will recollect the very powerful and distinct manner of both speaking and singing which he exhibited in his profession. The surgeons, after noticing the stomach, &c., say—"The lungs were adherent to the pleura costalis universally, and when cut into, exhibited a compact texture; one very small vomica was noticed; the heart natural; cartilages of the ribs considerably ossified; the œsophagus had a small contraction near its upper part, which, however, gave way to a finger introduced; the cartilages of the larynx were partly ossified, and both they and the soft parts somewhat thickened; the lining membrane rough, as if from chronic inflammation; sacculus laryngis of the right side entirely obliterated, that of the left side not so completely effaced; the trachea was very large, and the muscles of the voice very strong. Were not these morbid appearances of the larynx produced by frequent and powerful efforts of the voice in his public exercises?"

From our knowledge of this extraordinary young man, who died at the early age of 26 or 27, we should answer "no—but from the abuse of these great natural powers in the frequent and powerful efforts of the voice in his 'private' exercises."

After the death of Mr. Placide, Mrs. Placide at-

tempted the management of the Charleston theatre, but failed in it, or was discouraged, and relinquished the scheme. Mr. Holman conducted the southern theatre for one season, and went to England for recruits at the end of it. But though successful in his errand, his plans were frustrated by his sudden death.

The recent purchase of Louisiana, and settlement of the great valley of the Mississippi, will make the theatre of this vast and populous region a subject for a subsequent work ; we will only briefly and rapidly notice the progress of the drama of the west.

The French theatre was planted in New-Orleans as early as 1809 ; but it did not flourish until a new house was built in 1818, by John Davis, Esq., and a regular company imported from France. The gentleman who introduced the English drama into these regions is entitled to our notice on many accounts. In a future work we shall speak more fully of him.

James H. Caldwell commenced his managerial career in 1817, in the District of Columbia, and built by subscription, in 1818, a new theatre in Petersburg, Virginia. In the same year he performed the first play that had been witnessed in Richmond after the calamitous fire which we have recorded above. Having been invited to make an establishment at New-Orleans, he embarked with a company of great force at City Point, James' River, and on the 7th of January, 1820, represented at New-Orleans the first English drama ever performed in that city by a regular *corps dramatique*. *The Honey-moon*, and *Three and Deuce*,

were the pieces of the evening. After a season of four months, Mr. Caldwell returned to Petersburg. He has continued annually to visit New-Orleans from that time, and has introduced most of the actors of merit, known to the continent, either as residents or visitors.

On the 29th of May, 1822, the corner-stone of the first American theatre in New-Orleans was laid. This house is nearly on the model of the Chestnut-street theatre, Philadelphia. It has been recently enlarged and improved. It will contain 2000 people. On the 9th of May, 1823, this house was first opened, with *The Honey-moon*, and *Three and Deuce*. It was not then finished, but in 1824, on the 1st of January, it was opened in a state of complete preparation, with an appropriate address.

The gradual decline of the drama in Virginia induced Mr. Caldwell to try Nashville, the capital of the state of Tennessee. Accordingly he built a handsome theatre, to contain 700 auditors, which was opened on the 9th of October, 1826. *The Honey-Moon* was again the opening play, to which was added the farce of *Of Age To-morrow*.

Several attempts had been made to establish the drama at Natches, in the state of Mississippi. A temporary building for that purpose had been erected in 1818, and had been occupied by amateurs, and occasionally a corps of Thespians. In 1822, this building was destroyed by fire. On the 30th of April, 1828, Mr. Caldwell opened a very neat and commodious brick theatre, capable of containing 700 persons. The

same enterprising manager established himself at St. Louis, and opened a new theatre at Huntsville, Alabama, in 1826.

Thus we see an intelligent and enterprising gentleman establishing himself and the drama in this great and rapidly increasing portion of the United States, and growing with its growth, which is beyond parallel in the history of the world.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Two Letters from two Dramatists.

IN answer to queries made by us we have received two letters from two distinguished dramatists, written with such frankness, and in a style so congenial to the feelings intended to be expressed in this work, that we know no mode of communicating the information they contain that will be so acceptable to the reader as by giving them in the words of the writers. The plays of these gentlemen are an honour to the dramatic literature of the country, and we feel that the brief and pleasant sketch given by the authors will induce those who have not before met with such as are published, to lose no time in becoming acquainted with them by perusal. Both these dramatists are honourably employed in the civil service of their country, and we hope will be protected in their evening of life from those ills which some of their brethren have to encounter, who have not taken the tide of fortune at its flood, or, perhaps, merited public confidence.

“ *To William Dunlap, Esq.,*

“ Philadelphia, 10th June 1832.

“ DEAR SIR ;

“ My friend Wood informed me, a few days since, that you desired a list of my dramatic productions for your History of the American Stage. I had almost resolved, in these utilitarian times, to forget that I had ever indulged in such fantasies ; but in drawing the poor neglected things from their obscure retreats, just to see what they were made of, I could not but feel something like a return of fatherly affection for them ; sufficient, at least, to induce me, if not to sketch their lives and characters, to record their names, that posterity may know, through your immortal pages, that such things were. As I write on Sunday, the work-day world cannot find fault, however I may deserve the censure of *holy*-day folks.

“ Very early in life I began a play of three acts, with a marquis and banditti in it. Cervantes furnished the plot, and it was to be called the SPANISH ROVER. This was in the year 1804. The fate of the one act, which was completed, will be seen hereafter.

“ In the next year, 1805, I wrote a mask, entitled AMERICA : a brief, one act piece, consisting of poetic dialogue, and sung by the genius of America, Science, Liberty, and attendant spirits, after the manner of the mask in the Tempest. It was to close a drama I had projected on the adventures of Smith in Virginia, in the olden time. The drama, however, when completed, was found sufficiently long without it, and the

mask was laid aside. It was never represented nor printed.

“ATTILA, a tragedy, suggested by Gibbon, of course, was commenced about this period, and nearly two acts were written. Should I ever be tempted to do any thing more in the dramatic way, it will be to finish Attila. He is certainly an excellent stage personage. I was, a year or two ago, on the point of bringing him forward for Forest, when I was informed that Stone had an Attila almost ready for the stage: he since tells me that he has laid it up in lavender. When I commenced, I had not an idea that this hero had ever been, or could ever be, thought of by dramatic mortal man, and behold ye, Corneille and Schiller have each written an Attila; Stone had almost done another, and just as I had determined to go at it, forth comes an Attila in London; which, however, is said to be a dull poem. But have you never yourself been the victim of these odd coincidences, and just as you had fixed upon a subject or a title, found yourself superseded—a thing next in atrocity to the ancients’ stealing all one’s fine thoughts. My comedy of *Tears and Smiles* was to be called *Name it Yourself*, when out comes a *Name it Yourself*, in England, and out comes too a *Smiles and Tears*, with a widow, an Irishman, and almost all my *dramat. pers.* I write the *Indian Princess*, and an *Indian Princess* appears in England. Looking over the old English dramatists, I am struck with the *Damon and Pythias* of Edwards as a subject, but am scarcely set down to it,

when lo, the modern play in London ; and what is worse, with the fine part of Pythias absolutely transformed into a snivelling fellow, who bellows like a calf at the prospect of dying for his friend. *Wallace* was purloined from me in like manner, and several other heroes : at length I fix upon *Epaminondas*, as a 'learned Theban' of so philosophical a cast of character, that even the French had not thought of him for the boards. I form my plot, and begin *con amore*, when I am told that Dr. Bird has written a *Pelopidas* and an *Epaminondas*, comprehending the whole life of the latter. There is something curious in this, is there not ? But the coincidences are not restricted to dramatic subjects ; half a dozen literary projects of mine have met a similar fate. I will mention one. Being botanically inclined, and fond of rural description, I had the material prepared for a book of poetico-prose botany, to be beautifully christened the *Circle of the Seasons*—when, by heavens, there is published in England not only a *Book of the Seasons*, but an identical *Circle of the Seasons* ! This was too bad, and so, with Billy Black, 'I give it up.' Excuse me for this rambling : I return to my list.

"TEARS AND SMILES, a comedy, in five acts, was written between the 1st of May and 12th of June, 1806. The idea of writing was suggested at a dinner of the fishing company, at their ancient castle on the Schuylkill, on which august occasion you were yourself a guest. The topic happened to be Breck's *Far Chase*, which had been first acted on the preceding

night. Manager Warren, who was present, asked me to enter the lists as a dramatist, and Jefferson put in for a Yankee character. By-the-way, such a Yankee as I drew! I wonder what Hackett would say to it! The truth is, I had never even seen a Yankee at the time. You may have forgotten all this; and also that in walking home, I having ventured to hint to you that I had already written a dramatic piece, you very frankly advised me to throw it into the fire, remarking that the first attempts of young dramatists were never fit to be seen, and always made their authors ashamed. When I got home, determined to obey the injunction of the oracle, I took up the mask 'with zeal to destroy.' But no: I could not immolate liberty, science, peace, plenty—nay, my country, *America*—and so I saved my conscience by bringing the *Spanish Rover*, robbers and all, to the stake, a fate which I dare say they richly deserved. *Tears and Smiles* was cast with the whole strength of the company: Warren, Wood, Cain, Jefferson, Blissett, Mills, M'Kenzie, Bray; and Mesdames Melmoth, Wood, Woodham, Francis, Jefferson. It was first acted March 4th, 1807, to a brilliant audience, and with complete success. Notwithstanding, I must confess that one of the deities of the gallery, where I had ensconced me, did fall fast asleep (O all ye gods!) in the second act. Nay, others appeared likely to follow his example, during the sentimental dialogue, and were perhaps only kept awake by the expectation of seeing "that funny fellow, Jeff., again." Never did I

hail a 'funny fellow' with so much glee as on that eventful night. The prologue was kindly undertaken by Wood, who began in his most lofty manner—

“ ‘ With swelling port, imperious, and vain,’

and there he stopped, at a dead fault. After in vain endeavouring to recall what was to follow, he addressed the audience:—‘ Upon my soul, ladies and gentlemen, I am so unaccustomed to this kind of speaking, that I must beg, &c., &c.,’ in his peculiar, janty way, and with his usual happy effect. The piece was announced for repetition on the next night, the author was ‘trotted out,’ and ambled through the lobbies and boxes, and the booksellers made proposals. What a triumph for a tyro ! I gave the copyright to Blake, who transferred it to Longworth. On the second night, being in the green room, several of the ladies complained, on coming off, that they were put out in their parts by the loud and impertinent remarks from one of the stage boxes. My course was instantly adopted. I went round to the box, and calling out one of the gentlemen, made such an expostulation as had the desired effect. The conduct of those persons had been so flagrantly indecent as to draw upon them sounds of disapprobation from several parts of the house. They were certain witlings about town—Samuel Ewing, a lawyer, was one—who, induced by the reputation the piece had gained on the first night, to lay aside their habitual apathy towards American

productions, were now aroused only to malignant feeling, as I was neither politically nor socially of their set.


“THE EMBARGO ; *or, What News?* liberally borrowed from Murphy’s *Upholsterer*, was prepared for Blissett’s benefit, on the 16th of March, 1808. The subject of an embargo, then existing, was rather ticklish, and some of the patriotic sentiments were somewhat coldly received by a portion of the audience ; but the majority were of the right feeling, and bore me triumphantly through. Very much to their credit, several of our merchants were distinguished for the applause they bestowed. I know not what became of the manuscript : Blissett took the piece to Baltimore, where it was performed, and whence it was sent, at the request of Bernard, to Boston. It was never printed.

“THE INDIAN PRINCESS, in three acts, founded on the story of Captain Smith and Pocahontas, began some time before, was taken up in 1808, at the request of Bray and worked up into an opera, the music to which he composed. It was first performed for his benefit on the 6th of April, 1808, to a crowded house : but Webster, particularly obnoxious, at that period, to a large party, having a part in it, a tremendous tumult took place, and it was scarcely heard. I was on the stage, and directed the curtain to be dropped. It has since been frequently acted in, I believe, all the theatres of the United States. A few years since, I observed, in an English magazine, a critique on a drama called *Pocahontas* ; or, the

Indian Princess, produced at Drury-lane. From the sketch given, this piece differs essentially from mine in the plan and arrangement ; and yet, according to the critic, they were indebted for this very stupid production 'to America, where it is a great favourite, and is to be found in all the printed collections of stock plays.' The copyright of the 'Indian Princess' was also given to Blake, and transferred to Longworth. It was printed in 1808 or 1809. George Washington Custis, of Arlington, has, I am told, written a drama on the same subject.

"In 1809, at the request of the managers, I altered, that is, *Americanized* Cherry's *Travellers* ; making it, I am afraid, little less absurd than I found it.

"MARMION, from Scott's poem, was finished early in 1812, at the special request of Wood. The Chronicles of Hollinshed supplied me with several characters, and particularly with a good speech for King James, in which a close parallel is run between the conduct of England to Scotland, and (by allusion) to this country. As it was intended by Wood and Cooper that *Marmion* should come out as an English play, I was fearful this 'one speech' might 'unkennel' the 'occult' design, but they declared it must remain as a powerful 'touch at the times ;' and remain it did, and was always effective. A London critic, in *The Opera Glass*, quotes it, with the remark that it must have had a powerful effect when uttered on our stage at the period when hostilities were about commencing ; and it is also quoted with applause by a critic in the *American Quarterly Review*. *Marmion* was first



acted in New-York, in April, 1812. Cooper announced it as a play by Thomas Morton, Esq., author of *Columbus*, &c. ; this was audacious enough in all conscience, but the finesse was successful, and a play most probably otherwise destined to neglect, ran like wildfire through all our theatres. I never felt very proud of the circumstance. The war intervening, I had no leisure to attend to the publishing *Marmion*, until it was printed by Palmer, Philadelphia, I think, for I have not a copy of the first edition by me. It was again published, very much curtailed, in the 'Acting American Theatre.'

"Talking of coincidences, on the very day I sent *Marmion* to New-York, I received a note from a Mrs. Ellis, who had furnished the Olympic theatre with several pieces, *Cinderella*, *Otranto*, &c., begging me to furnish in the newspapers a puff or two for a new drama, *Marmion*, that she was about producing.

"THE ARMOURER'S ESCAPE; or *Three Years at Nootka Sound*, a melo-dramatic sketch, in two acts, founded on the adventures of John Jewitt, armourer of the ship *Boston*, was first acted at Philadelphia, 24th March, 1817. Jewitt performed the hero himself. The only copy of the piece was taken by Jewitt.

"HOW TO TRY A LOVER, a comedy in three acts, suggested by some passages in a whimsical novel of Le Brun's, and introducing the novelty, as I then thought it, of the 'Court of Love' to the stage. The play was written in 1817. It was cast, studied, rehearsed, and announced; and why it was not acted, I

am unable to say, as it was the only drama I have written with which I was satisfied. It was printed, ready to be published after representation.

“SUPERSTITION, a serious dramatic tale, in five acts, was first performed 12th March, 1824; it is published in the *Acting American Theatre*. The London ‘Opera Glass’ and the American Quarterly Review speak favourably, if not flatteringly, of it.

“I have written nothing since.

“In haste,

“Yours very truly,

“J. N. BARKER.”

Mr. Noah’s answer to our inquiries bears the same character with that received from Mr. Barker, and we insert it without alteration, for the reason assigned in respect to the letter of his brother dramatist.

To William Dunlap, Esq.

“New-York, July 11th, 1832.

“DEAR SIR,

“I am happy to hear that your work on the American Drama is in press, and trust that you may realize from it that harvest of fame and money to which your untiring industry and diversified labours give you an eminent claim. You desire me to furnish you a list of my dramatic productions; it will, my dear sir, constitute a sorry link in the chain of American writers—my plays have all been *ad captandum*: a kind of *amateur* performance, with no claim to the character of a settled, regular, or domiciliated writer

for the green-room—a sort of volunteer supernumerary—a dramatic writer by ‘particular desire, and for this night only,’ as they say in the bills of the play; my ‘line,’ as you well know, has been in the more rugged paths of politics, a line in which there is more fact than poetry, more feeling than fiction; in which, to be sure, there are ‘exits and entrances’—where the ‘prompter’s whistle’ is constantly heard in the voice of the people; but which, in our popular government, almost disqualifies us for the more soft and agreeable translation to the lofty conceptions of tragedy, the pure diction of genteel comedy, or the wit, gaiety, and humour of broad farce.

“ I had an early hankering for the national drama, a kind of juvenile patriotism, which burst forth, for the first time, in a few sorry doggrels in the form of a prologue to a play, which a Thespian company, of which I was a member, produced in the South-street theatre—the old American theatre in Philadelphia. The idea was probably suggested by the sign of the Federal Convention at the tavern opposite the theatre. You, no doubt, remember the picture and the motto: an excellent piece of painting of the kind, representing a group of venerable personages engaged in public discussions, with the following distich:

“ ‘These thirty-eight great men have signed a powerful deed,
That better times, to us, shall very soon succeed.’

“ The sign must have been painted soon after the adoption of the federal constitution, and I remember to have stood ‘many a time and oft,’ gazing, when

a boy, at the assembled patriots, particularly the venerable head and spectacles of Dr. Franklin, always in conspicuous relief. In our Thespian corps, the honour of cutting the plays, substituting new passages, casting parts, and writing couplets at the exits, was divided between myself and a fellow of infinite wit and humour, by the name of Helmbold; who subsequently became the editor of a scandalous little paper, called *The Tickler*: he was a rare rascal, perpetrated all kind of calumnies, was constantly mulcted in fines, sometimes imprisoned, was full of faults, which were forgotten in his conversational qualities and dry sallies of genuine wit, particularly his Dutch stories. After years of singular vicissitudes, Helmbold joined the army as a common soldier, fought bravely during the late war, obtained a commission, and died. Our little company soon dwindled away; the expenses were too heavy for our pockets; our writings and performances were sufficiently wretched, but as the audience was admitted without cost, they were too polite to express any disapprobation. We recorded all our doings in a little weekly paper, published, I believe, by Jemmy Riddle, at the corner of Chesnut and Third-street, opposite the tavern kept by that sturdy old democrat, Israel Israel.

“From a boy, I was a regular attendant of the Chesnut-street theatre, during the management of Wignell and Reinagle, and made great efforts to compass the purchase of a season ticket, which I obtained generally of the treasurer, George Davis, for eighteen dollars. Our habits through life are fre-

quently governed and directed by our early steps. I seldom missed a night ; and always retired to bed, after witnessing a good play, gratified and improved : and thus, probably, escaped the haunts of taverns, and the pursuits of depraved pleasures, which too frequently allure and destroy our young men ; hence I was always the firm friend of the drama, and had an undoubted right to oppose my example through life to the horror and hostility expressed by sectarians to plays and play-houses generally. Independent of several of your plays which had obtained possession of the stage, and were duly incorporated in the legitimate drama, the first call to support the productions of a fellow townsman, was, I think, Barker's opera of *The Indian Princess*. Charles Ingersoll had previously written a tragedy, a very able production for a very young man, which was supported by all the 'good society ;' but Barker, who was 'one of us,' an amiable and intelligent young fellow, who owed nothing to hereditary rank, though his father was a whig, and a soldier of the revolution, was in reality a fine spirited poet, a patriotic ode writer, and finally a gallant soldier of the late war. The managers gave Barker an excellent chance with all his plays, and he had merit and popularity to give them in return full houses.

" About this time, I ventured to attempt a little melo-drama, under the title of *The Fortress of Sorrento*, which, not having money enough to pay for printing, nor sufficient influence to have acted, I thrust the manuscript in my pocket, and, having oc-

casion to visit New-York, I called in at David Longworth's Dramatic Repository one day, spoke of the little piece, and struck a bargain with him, by giving him the manuscript in return for a copy of every play he had published, which at once furnished me with a tolerably large dramatic collection. I believe the play never was performed, and I was almost ashamed to own it; but it was my first regular attempt at dramatic composition.

"In the year 1812, while in Charleston, Mr. Young requested me to write a piece for his wife's benefit. You remember her, no doubt; remarkable as she was for her personal beauty and amiable deportment, it would have been very ungallant to have refused, particularly as he requested that it should be a '*breeches part*,' to use a green-room term, though she was equally attractive in every character. Poor Mrs. Young! she died last year in Philadelphia. When she first arrived in New-York, from London, it was difficult to conceive a more perfect beauty; her complexion was of dazzling whiteness, her golden hair and ruddy complexion, figure somewhat *embon-point*, and graceful carriage, made her a great favourite. I soon produced the little piece, which was called *Paul and Alexis, or the Orphans of the Rhine*. I was, at that period, a very active politician, and my political opponents did me the honour to go to the theatre the night it was performed, for the purpose of hissing it, which was not attempted until the curtain fell, and the piece was successful. After three years' absence in Europe and Africa, I saw the same piece

performed at the Park, under the title of *The Wandering Boys*, which even now holds possession of the stage. It seems Mr. Young sent the manuscript to London, where the title was changed, and the bantling cut up, altered, and considerably improved.

“About this time, John Miller, the American bookseller in London, paid us a visit. Among the passengers in the same ship was a fine English girl of great talent and promise, Miss Leesugg, afterwards Mrs. Hackett. She was engaged at the Park as a singer, and Phillips, who was here about the same period fulfilling a most successful engagement, was decided and unqualified in his admiration of her talent. Every one took an interest in her success: she was gay, kind-hearted, and popular, always in excellent spirits, and always perfect. Anxious for her success, I ventured to write a play for her benefit, and in three days finished the patriotic piece of *She would be a Soldier, or the Battle of Chippewa*, which, I was happy to find, produced her an excellent house. Mrs. Hackett retired from the stage after her marriage, and lost six or seven years of profitable and unrivalled engagement.

“After this play, I became in a manner domiciliated in the green-room. My friends, Price and Simpson, who had always been exceedingly kind and liberal, allowed me to stray about the premises like one of the family, and, always anxious for their success, I ventured upon another attempt for a holiday occasion, and produced *Marion, or the Hero of Lake George*. It was played

on the 25th of November, Evacuation day, and I bustled about among my military friends, to raise a party in support of a military play, and what with generals, staff-officers, rank and file, the Park theatre was so crammed, that not a word of the play was heard, which was a very fortunate affair for the author. The managers presented me with a pair of handsome silver pitchers, which I still retain as a memento of their good-will and friendly consideration. You must bear in mind that while I was thus employed in occasional attempts at play-writing, I was engaged in editing a daily journal, and in all the fierce contests of political strife: I had, therefore, but little time to devote to all that study and reflection so essential to the success of dramatic composition.

“ My next piece, I believe, was written for the benefit of a relative and friend, who wanted something to bring a house; and as the struggle for liberty in Greece was at that period the prevailing excitement, I finished the melodrama of the *Grecian Captive*, which was brought out with all the advantages of good scenery and music. As a ‘good house’ was of more consequence to the actor than fame to the author, it was resolved that the hero of the piece should make his appearance on an elephant, and the heroine on a camel, which were procured from a neighbouring *menagerie*, and the *tout ensemble* was sufficiently imposing, only it happened that the huge elephant, in shaking his skin, so rocked the castle on his back, that the Grecian general nearly lost his balance, and

was in imminent danger of coming down from his 'high estate,' to the infinite merriment of the audience. On this occasion, to use another significant phrase, a 'gag' was hit upon of a new character altogether. The play was printed, and each auditor was presented with a copy gratis, as he entered the house. Figure to yourself a thousand people in a theatre, each with a book of the play in hand—imagine the turning over a thousand leaves simultaneously, the buzz and fluttering it produced, and you will readily believe that the actors entirely forgot their parts, and even the equanimity of the elephant and camel were essentially disturbed.

"My last appearance as a dramatic writer was in another national piece, called *The Siege of Tripoli*, which the managers persuaded me to bring out for my own benefit, being my first attempt to derive any profit from dramatic efforts. The piece was elegantly got up—the house crowded with beauty and fashion—every thing went off in the happiest manner; when, a short time after the audience had retired, the Park theatre was discovered to be on fire, and in a short time was a heap of ruins. This conflagration burnt out all my dramatic fire and energy, since which I have been, as you well know, peaceably employed in settling the affairs of the nation, and mildly engaged in the political differences and disagreements which are so fruitful in our great state.

"I still, however, retain a warm interest for the success of the drama, and all who are entitled to success engaged in sustaining it, and to none greater than to

yourself, who have done more, in actual labour and successful efforts, than any man in America. That you may realize all you have promised yourself, and all that you are richly entitled to, is the sincere wish of

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your friend and servant,

“ M. M. NOAH.

“ *Wm. Dunlap, Esq.*”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Scraps—Mr. Cooke's Father—Miss Rock—Cooke and Matthews—Kean—Cooke's Monument—Mr. and Miss Holman—Doctor Wilson's Letter to Doctor Hosack—Doctor Hosack's Introductory Letter borne by Mr. Holman to a friend in Philadelphia—Letter to Doctor Hosack on the Death of Mr. Holman.

WE have fulfilled our engagement, by bringing up the history of the American theatre to the arrival of George Frederick Cooke, the greatest Richard, Sir Giles Overreach, Falstaff, Iago, Sir Pertinax, and Sir Archy, that the western world has seen. We have even gone a little beyond our limits; and as there is nothing so dear to man as liberty, we will, in this additional chapter, indulge ourselves in speaking of *any* thing, or *any* body, in *any* way connected with our subject, which, or who, may be presented to the imagination of an author delighted at seeing that he has reached the goal proposed at starting in his race,—the last chapter.

And first, Cooke. We have represented him in our two volumes, published by Longworth in New-York and Colburn in London, as the son of a captain in the 4th dragoons; but have no doubt that the

•

captain must be reduced to a sergeant, as we have had more accurate information on that subject from the widow of Mr. Rock, the tragedian's old and tried friend. In this we have misled Mr. Galt, who, in his *Lives of Players*, has trusted us as we trusted Cooke. The mother of the tragedian was a lady by birth and education; and, his father dying when the boy was very young, he received his earliest impressions from, and under the eyes of, his widowed and probably too indulgent parent.

Mrs. Rock was in this country with her niece, Miss Rock, a very accomplished young lady, carefully educated for the profession she ornamented, and one of the best actresses we have seen on our boards in a certain line of playing. But Miss Rock, though pleasing, was deficient in the rare charms of superior personal beauty: she wanted height. She danced elegantly, not as a dancer, but as a lady; she was a musician, and sung well. With the figure and face of some we could name, her Letitia Hardy would have been the best in the world.

We have a little more to say of George Frederick Cooke, and it is connected with two of the most extraordinary characters of the drama that have dazzled the eyes of the good people of the western hemisphere, —Kean and Matthews. And first, the mimic and comedian. What I have to say of him shall be told in my autobiographical style, and is another correction of my aforesaid memoirs of George Frederick.

It was in the month of April, in the year 1823, that I embarked, with two hundred and fifty others,

in the steamboat Chancellor Livingston, for Albany. After the bustle of leave-taking, and the various ceremonies and multifarious acts of hurried business, which daily take place on the departure of one of these self-moving hotels from the city of New-York, I had leisure to look around me, with the intention of finding some acquaintance as a companion, or at least to satisfy my curiosity as to who were on board.

I had seen many faces known to me when I first entered the boat, but they had vanished : all appeared, at first, strange. I soon, however, observed James Fenimore Cooper, the justly-celebrated novelist, in conversation with Dr. Francis. The last mentioned gentleman I had long known, but with the first my acquaintance was of recent date. We had occasionally met at the bookstore of Wiley, his publisher ; but it was not until after the circumstances I am now recording that an intimacy took place which has been to me a source of very great pleasure.

I soon after noted a man of extraordinary appearance, who moved rapidly about the deck, and occasionally joined the gentlemen above named. His age might be forty ; his figure, tall, thin, and muscular ; one leg was shorter than the other, which, although it occasioned a halt in his gait, did not impede his activity ; his features were extremely irregular, yet his physiognomy was intelligent, and his eyes remarkably searching and expressive. I had never seen Matthews, either in private or public, nor do I recollect that I had at that time ever seen any representation of him, or heard his person described ; but I

instantly concluded that this was no other than the celebrated mimic and player. Doubtless his dress and manner, which were evidently English, and that peculiarity which still marks some of the votaries of the histrionic art, helped me to this conclusion. I say, "still marks;" for I remember the time when the distinction was so gross that a child would say, "There goes a play-actor."

The afternoon was uncommonly fine for our climate in the cold month of April. The passengers generally kept the deck. We had not gone far on our voyage before the author of *The Spy* (for he was then chiefly known by that fascinating work) accosted me nearly thus:—"I understand from Matthews that you and he have never met. He is on board, and has expressed a wish to be introduced to you. Have you seen him off the stage?"

"No—nor on."

"Is it possible! There he stands with Francis."

"I have been noticing that figure, and had come to a conclusion that it was Matthews."

"His figure is odd enough, to be sure. I suppose you know that his lameness and the deficiency in the regular symmetry of his face are owing to his being thrown from a gig, and very much injured by the fall; but these defects are not seen on the stage, or are turned to good account by his skill in his profession."

Part of this dialogue passed as we approached the subject of it, and I soon made acquaintance with Charles Matthews. He introduced the subject of George Frederick Cooke and his *Memoirs*, compli-

mented the author of them, and of course made himself agreeable. Fenimore was very attentive to me, and appeared to wish my gratification by a display of the talents of Matthews, who, as the novelist afterwards told me, was at his suggestion making a voyage to Albany, that he might see something more of America and American manners than is to be found in a seaport town.

The figure and manner of the actor were sufficiently uncommon to attract the attention of a throng of men usually employed in active business, but here, placed in a situation which, of all others, calls for something to while away time ; but when some who traced the likeness between the actor on the deck of the steamboat and the actor on the stage of the theatre, buzzed it about that this was the mirth-inspiring Matthews, curiosity showed itself in as many modes as there were varieties of character in the motley crowd around him. This very natural and powerful propensity, which every person who exposes himself, or herself, upon a public stage, to the gaze of the mixed multitude, wishes ardently to excite, was, under the present peculiar circumstances of time, place, and leisure, expressed in a manner rather annoying to the hero of the sock, who would now willingly have appeared in the character of a private gentleman. There are individuals who can generally overcome this difficulty by dint of character, talent, or personal appearance ; but in the case before us there was nothing sufficiently dignified to repress the clownish propensities of such among the crowd as were clowns, and they were not a few.

The passengers in the Chancellor Livingston finding themselves on the same boards with the celebrated Matthews, and at liberty to gaze without paying for it, at the man who had delighted them on the stage, gratified their curiosity without much ceremony; and whenever Matthews was perceived to be stationary, and with his usual animation amusing his immediate companions, the watchful loungers closed around by degrees, and, according to character, feeling, or education, became distant or nearer auditors and admirers of the wondrous man.

One clown, in particular, followed the object of his very sincere admiration with a pertinacity which deserved a better return than it met. He was to Matthews a perfect Monsieur Tonson, and his appearance seemed to excite the same feelings. The novelist and physician pointed out to me the impertinent curiosity of this admirer of the actor, and we all took some portion of mischievous delight in observing the irritability of Matthews. It increased to a ludicrous degree, when Matthews found that no effort or change of place could exclude his tormentor from his sight; and when, after having made an effort to avoid him, he, on turning his head, saw Monsieur Tonson fixed as a statue, again listening in motionless admiration to his honeyed words, the actor would suddenly change from the animated relation of story or anecdote, with which he had been entertaining his companions, to the outpouring of a rhapsody of incoherent nonsense, uttered with incredible volubility. Without altering his former manner, he would rattle off some-

thing like, "Sardanapalus Heliogabalus Faustina and Kitty Fisher, with their fourteen children, Cecrops Moses Ariadne Robinson Crusoe Nimrod Captain Cooke Bonaparte and Jack the Giant-killer had a long confab with Nebuchadonozer Sir Walter Raleigh and the pope on the best mode of making caraway comfits." But he found that this only made his admirer listen more intently, and open his eyes and mouth more widely and earnestly. As it happens with many other orators, the more unintelligible his nonsense, the greater was the admiration of the auditor.

We had but one regular meal on the passage, a very plentiful supper, at about seven o'clock, with tea and coffee. We had embarked at 5 P.M., and arrived at Albany by sunrising. The meal was not suited to the habits of Mr. Matthews, and he was offended by both the matter and manner of it; but when the preparations for sleeping took place, and he found that the whole company, females excepted, must seek rest in the same cabin, some in berths and others accommodated with mattresses on the floor, his feelings revolted, and he protested against taking rest on such terms.

To this feeling I am indebted for a night of much amusement; I should be unjust if I did not add, and some instruction. I had secured a mattress on the floor of one of the cabins, and should have dully slept away at least part of the night, had not Fenimore Cooper given me intimation of Matthews's wish to sit up, and of his (Cooper's) success in obtaining the

captain's cabin on the deck of the vessel, where Matthews, Francis, and himself, had determined to enjoy a supper, whiskey-punch, and as much convivial pleasure as could be extracted from such circumstances and such a meeting. I was invited to make one, and readily accepted the invitation.

Seated in the captain's cabin, and freed from all annoyance, Matthews became, as usual, the fiddle of the company; and story, anecdote, imitation, and song, poured from him with the rapidity and brilliancy of the stars which burst from a rocket on a rejoicing night. To make himself still more agreeable to the senior, he introduced the memoirs of George Frederick, with that flattery which is delicious to all men, and peculiarly so to an author. "The story of Cooke and Mrs. Burns," he added, "you have told remarkably well, and when I have introduced it in my '*Youthful Days*,' I have always taken your words; but Tom Cooper, from whom, as I understand, you had it, forgot the termination of the story,—the real *denouement*—which makes it infinitely more dramatic." All joined in the request that Matthews would tell the story in his own way, and he, nothing loath, began:—

"I was a raw recruit in the Thespian corps, and it was my first campaign in Dublin. Chance made me a fellow-lodger with Cooke, at the house of Mistress Burns. I had looked at the great actor with an awful reverence, but had not yet been honoured by any notice from him.

"In getting up Macklin's *Love à la Mode*, I had

been cast for Beau Mordecai, and assuredly a more unfit representative of the *little Jew* can scarcely be imagined. As tall as I now am, I had then all the rawboned awkwardness of a *hobbletey*, and no knowledge of the world or of the stage. But Mr. Cooke must be shown to the Dublin public in Sir Archy, and there was no other Mordecai to be had. I was, however, perfect in the words; and if I murdered the Jew, I did it impartially; I murdered him 'every inch.'

"After the farce, I *tarried*, as you Yankees say, *a considerable time* at the theatre, rather choosing to linger among the almost expiring dipped candles of the dressing-rooms than to seek, through mist and mud, my lofty but comfortless abode in Mrs. Burns's garret; but the property-man gave me my cue to depart, by putting out the lights; and I was slowly mounting to my bed, when, as I passed the room of the great man, I saw him (the doors being open) sitting with a jug before him, indulging after the labours of the evening. I was stealing by, and had already one foot on the flight of stairs which led to my exalted apartment, when I was arrested by a loud, high-pitched voice, crying 'Come hither, young man.' I could scarcely believe my senses: I hesitated. 'Come in,' was repeated. I advanced. 'Shut the door, and sit down.' I obeyed. He assumed an air of courtesy, and calling upon Mistress Burns for another tumbler, filled for himself and me. 'You will be so kind, my good Mistress Burns, as to bring another pitcher of whiskey-punch in honour of our

young friend.' 'To be sure and I will, Mr. Cooke.' The punch was brought, and a hot supper, an unusual luxury then to me. After supper, the veteran, quite refreshed and at ease, chatted incessantly of plays and players,—lashing some, commending others,—while I, delighted to be thus honoured, listened and laughed; thus playing naturally and sincerely the part of a most agreeable companion. After the third jug of punch, I was sufficiently inspired to ask a few questions, and even to praise the acting of the veteran.

"To use your own words, as I have often before done," said Matthews, addressing himself to the biographer, "'one jug of whiskey-punch followed the other;'" and Cooke began to advise his young companion how to conduct himself on the real and on the mimic scene of life. 'You are young, and want a friend to guide you. Talent you have; but talent without prudence is worthless, and may be pernicious. Take my word for it, there is nothing can place a man at the head of his profession but industry and sobriety. Mistress Burns!—Shun ebriety as you would shun destruction. Mistress Burns! another jug of whiskey-punch, Mistress Burns.'

"'O, Mister Cooke—'

"'You make it so good, Mistress Burns; another jug.'

"'Yes, Mister Cooke.'

"'In our profession, my young friend, dissipation is the bane of hundreds; 'villanous company,' low company, leads to drinking; and the precious time is lost which should have been employed in gaining

that knowledge which alone can make men respectable. Ah! thank you, Mistress Burns: this has the true Hibernian smack!

“ ‘ You may say that, Mister Cooke.’ ”

It is needless to remind the reader that, with the aid of Matthews's powers of imitation, sometimes called ventriloquism in this humbugging world, all this and much more would be extremely pleasant, and the more especially as the company had repeated supplies of the same inspiring beverage from the steward, and almost as good, certainly as strong, as Mistress Burns's.

Matthews went on to describe the progress of Cooke's intoxication, during which his protests against drunkenness became stronger with each glass. He then undertook to instruct the tyro in the histrionic art, and especially in the manner of exhibiting the passions. Here it would be vain to endeavour to follow Matthews: Cooke's grimaces and voice,—while his physical powers, under the government of whiskey, rebelled at every effort against the intention of the lecturer,—were depicted by the mimic in a manner beyond the conception of even those who have seen the public exhibition of his talents: here all was unrestrained gig and fun, and the painting truly *con amore*, and glowing from heart and glass.

“ It must be remembered,” continued Mr. Matthews, “ that I was but a boy, and Cooke in the full vigour of manhood, with strength of limb and voice Herculean. I had the highest reverence for his talents, and literally stood in awe of him; so that when

he made his horrible faces, and called upon me to name the passion he had depicted, I was truly frightened,—overwhelmed with the dread of offending him, and utterly at a loss to distinguish one grimace from another, except as one was *more* and another *most* savage and disgusting.

“ ‘ Now, sir—observe—what’s that?’ ”

“ ‘ Revenge—’ ”

“ ‘ Revenge, you booby! Pity! pity!’ ”

“ Then, after making another hideous contortion of countenance, he cries, ‘ What is that, sir?’ ”

“ ‘ Very fine, sir; very fine, indeed.’ ”

“ ‘ But *what* is it, sir?’ ”

“ Forced to answer, and utterly unable to guess the meaning of the distorted face which he then again thrust before me, I stammered out, ‘ Anger, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ Anger!’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, sir; anger, to be sure.’ ”

“ ‘ To be sure you are a blockhead! Look again, sir, look again! It’s fear, sir—fear. You play! you a player!’ ”

Matthews then exhibited the face of Cooke, as he distorted it to express the tender passion,—a composition of Satanic malignity and the brutal leering of a drunken satyr,—and imitating Cooke’s most discordant voice, cried, ‘ There, sir; that’s love.’ ”

“ This,” continued Matthews, “ was more than I could bear: even my fears could not restrain my laughter: I roared. He stared at first; but immediately assuming a most furious aspect, he cried, ‘ What do you laugh at, sir! Is George Frederick

Cooke to be made a laughing-stock for a booby !
What, sir !

“ Luckily, at that moment Mrs. Burns stood with the door partly opened, and another jug in her hands. ‘ You must pardon me, sir,’ I said, with a quickness which must have been the inspiration of whiskey, ‘ but you happened to turn your soft and languishing look towards the door just as Mrs. Burns opened it, and I could not but think of the dangerous effect of such a look upon her sex’s softness.’

“ He laughed ; and embracing the jug as the good woman put it down, he looked at Mrs. Burns, and with some humour endeavoured to sing, *How happy could I be with either, were t’other dear charmer away*, but with a voice which defies art and nature for a comparison.

“ Mrs. Burns now protested against any more punch ; but, after some time, agreed upon Cooke’s solemn promise to be satisfied with one more jug, to bring it.

“ ‘ But remember your honour, Mister Cooke ; and *that* is the jewel of a jontleman ; and sure you have pledged it to me, you have.’

“ ‘ I have, my good Mistress Burns ; and it is ‘ the immediate jewel of the soul,’ as you say.’

“ ‘ I said no such thing ; but I’ll be as good as my word ; and one more jug you shall have, and the divil a bit more, jewel or no jewel !’

“ ‘ I was heartily tired by this time, and placed my hope on Mrs. Burns’s resolution. The last jug came,

and was finished ; and I wished him good night.'

" ' Not yet, my dear boy.'

" ' It's very late, sir.'

" ' Early, early : one jug more.'

" ' Mrs. Burns will not let us have it, sir.'

" ' She will not ! I'll show you that presently !' "

Then followed a fine specimen of imitation ; Matthews, as Cooke, calling, upon Mrs. Burns (who was in the room below, and in bed,) and then giving her answers, as coming up through the floor, in the manner called ventriloquism.

" ' Mistress Burns ! Do you hear, Mistress Burns ?'

" ' Indeed *and I do*, Mister Cooke.'

" ' Bring me another jug of whiskey-punch, Mistress Burns !'

" ' Indeed *and I won't*, Mister Cooke !'

" ' You won't ?'

" ' Indeed and indeed *so I won't*.'

" ' Do you hear that, Mistress Burns ?' (smashing the jug on the floor.)

" ' Indeed *and I do*, and you'll be sorry for it to-morrow.'

" He then regularly took the chairs, one by one, and broke them on the floor immediately over Mrs. Burns's head, after every crash crying, ' Do you hear that, Mistress Burns ?' and she as regularly answering, ' Indeed *and I do*, Mister Cooke.' He next opened the window, and threw the looking-glass into the street.

" I stood," continued Matthews, " in a state of

stupid amazement during this scene, but now attempted to make my escape, edging towards the door, and making a long stride to gain the garret stairs.

“‘Come back, sir! Where are you going?’

“‘To bed, sir.’

“‘To bed, sir! What, sir! desert me! I command you to remain, on your allegiance! Desert me in time of war! Traitor!’

“I now determined to make resistance; and feeling pot-valiant, looked big, and boldly answered,

“‘I will *not* be commanded! I *will* go to bed!’

“‘Aha!’ cried the madman, in his highest key, ‘Aha! do you rebel? Caitiff! wretch! murderer!’

“He advanced upon me, and I shrank to nothing before his flashing eye. ‘Murderer!’ and he seized me by the collar with Herculean grip, ‘You will go! I will send you to the place you are fittest for! Murderer, I’ll drag you to your doom! I’ll give you up to Fate! Come along, Caitiff!’ and he dragged me to the open window, vociferating, ‘Watch! watch! murder! murder!’ in his highest and loudest key.

“Immediately the rattles were heard approaching in all directions, and a crowd instantly collected. He continued vociferating, ‘Watch! watch! murder!’ until the rattles and exclamations of the watchmen almost drowned his stentorian voice.

“‘What’s the matter? who’s kilt? who’s murdered? Where’s the murderer?’

“‘Silence!’ screamed Cooke; ‘hear me!’ All became hushed. Then holding me up to the window,

the raving tragedian audibly addressed the crowd :—
'In the name of Charles Macklin, I charge this culprit, Charles Matthews, with the most foul, cruel, deliberate, and unnatural murder of the unfortunate Jew, Beau Mordecai, in the farce of *Love à la Mode*.' Then pulling down the window, he cried, 'Now go to bed, you booby ! go to bed ! go to bed ! go to bed !'

The steam-boat party remained together until near morning, and then retired to rest. Let it not be supposed that they imitated the folly of the hero of the above tale because whiskey-punch has been mentioned. The evening, or night, was one of real interchange of mind, heightened by the peculiar powers and habits of the very extraordinary histrionic artist who gave this instance of Cooke's eccentric and pernicious propensities.

I shall only now add to what has been said of Cooke a notice of the respect paid to his talents by his successor, Kean. It is known that Doctors M'Lean, Francis, and Hosack, were the physicians who endeavoured to save Cooke from the effects of his own folly. These gentlemen I am proud to call my friends, and from them I have received the knowledge of facts connected with the last scene in the actor's life, and the attention paid to his mortal remains after death.

The present dramatic record terminates, by agreement, with the arrival of Cooke in this country. The reader who is solicitous for further details of the drama, and dramatic literature, will probably turn to my *Memoirs of George Frederic Cooke*, which gives

a general view of the subject to the time of his death. As a further continuation of the American theatre may not be called for, I have thought it not uninteresting to give in this place some account of the respect paid to his memory by a most distinguished successor in his line of professional life.

Shortly after the arrival of the celebrated Edmund Kean in New-York, which was in November, 1820, he paid a visit to the place of the interment of Mr. Cooke ; and then determined, prior to his departure for Europe, to erect a suitable monument to the memory of him whose extraordinary powers, though he himself had never witnessed them, had been so highly lauded by every admirer of Shakspeare and lover of nature.

Accordingly, in June, 1821, the body of Mr. Cooke was removed from the strangers' vault, in St. Paul's church-yard, to a most eligible spot in the centre of that extensive burial-ground. Mr. Cooke died in September, 1812, and the monument over his remains was erected on the 4th of June, 1821. It is a well-executed work, in marble, by the Frazees, consisting of a square pedestal on two steps, surmounted by an urn, from the top of which a flame issues towards the Park Theatre, the scene of Mr. Cooke's greatest efforts in this country. The inscription on the tomb, which was furnished by Dr. Francis, who had superintended the removal of his remains, is as follows :—

“ Erected to the memory of George Frederick Cooke, by Edmund Kean, of the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane, 1821.

“Three kingdoms claim his birth,
Both hemispheres pronounce his worth.”

There have been published several engraved representations of this monument, in which the figures of Mr. Kean and Dr. Francis, and a medallion with a portrait of Mr. Cooke, are introduced. As a specimen of this species of work, the monument is worthy of the subject of it, and equally so of the liberality of Mr. Kean. If what old Fuller says be correct, that the shortest, plainest, and truest epitaphs are the best, no fault can be found with the inscription of Cooke's tomb. The place of his nativity is yet disputed : each portion of the United Kingdom claims him as its own, though there is no doubt that he was born in Westminster, as he told us, and we have recorded. He long enjoyed an unrivalled reputation, both in the Old and in the New World ; and although it may hereafter be found that his surgeon possesses his scull, and his successor, Kean, the bones of the forefinger of his right-hand,—that dictatorial finger,—still the monument covers the *remains* of George Frederick Cooke.

Having gone beyond our limits, we will mention another actor and actress who followed Cooke to this country :—Mr. Holman and his accomplished daughter.

The histrionic career of Mr. Holman was chequered in America not less perhaps than in Great Britain : nevertheless, through all vicissitudes, he sustained the character of the scholar, the man of honour, and the gentleman. He who shall at some future

day continue the History of the American Theatre, will fail in doing justice to an excellent man and a distinguished actor, if he does not enrich his materials with interesting incidents connected with the industry, talents, and strenuous efforts, of Mr. Holman to elevate the standard of the profession he had chosen. In the city of New-York, Mr. Holman might be considered as having secured a fair and honourable distinction by the public display of his talents; all that European criticism has awarded to him for his Lord Townley was realized by a New-York audience. His projects and measures to enlarge the dramatic taste in Albany were marred and circumscribed by want of sagacity in his pecuniary arrangements. In the south he unquestionably might have reaped a fair harvest of profit and fame, had not circumstances beyond his control blighted his harvest.

The notice which was taken abroad of his life and death seems to have been intended to operate as *in terrorem* to future dramatic adventure in this country. He was subjected, neither more nor less than other individuals, to the influence of pestilence or the stroke of lightning; and though his English biographer deems his demise as arising from the too great prevalence of these mighty agents in America, which, he says, carried him off in common with many others, it deserves to be here stated, that he died after an illness short indeed, but of a common cause of death, apoplexy, (as we are informed by his attending physician, Dr. Francis,) at Rockaway, Long Island, on

the morning of Sunday, the 24th of August, 1817, and in the fifty-third year of his age.

We live in America about as well and as long as in any country on earth ; and foreigners who leave their prejudices and their vices at home, will enjoy the blessings we are willing to share with them and be thankful. We believe Mr. Holman did so. But death will meet us, go where we will ; and the man born in Europe will surely die in America, if he comes here and stays long enough.

The following notice of Mr. Holman was published shortly after his decease.

“ Mr. Holman was a native of England, and a descendant of Sir John Holman, Bart., of Warkeworth Castle, Banbury. He received the early part of his education at the academy, Soho Square, London, with the view on the part of his friends to the church. In 1780, he entered Queen’s College, Oxford ; and such was the estimation in which he was held, that he received the honours of the University after he became attached to the theatrical corps. While at school he distinguished himself by his scenic exhibitions, and Garrick, who there witnessed his representation of Hamlet, pronounced most favourably of his performance.

“ His first appearance on a public stage was in the character of Romeo, at Covent Garden theatre, in 1784 ; his reception is said by many to have been in the highest degree flattering, and fully justified the expectations of his friends. He arrived in this coun-

try in the fall of 1812, since which time he uninterruptedly pursued his histrionic career.

“ The abilities of Mr. Holman as an actor are sufficiently declared by his maintaining a powerful rivalry with Kemble ; and his Lord Townley will long be remembered by the lovers of the drama in both hemispheres. He was distinguished as a gentleman and a scholar ; and, by the urbanity of his manners, and the force of his talents, greatly contributed to enhance the character of his profession. The virtues of his heart are known to all with whom he was in habits of intercourse.”

We copy the above, but deny that Mr. Holman was ever the powerful rival of John Kemble.

The principal of Mr. Holman's writings for the stage were—*Abroad and at Home*, *The Red Cross Knights*, *The Votary of Wealth*, *What a Blunder*, *Love gives the Alarm*, and *The Gazette Extraordinary*.

As early as 1811, it was known that Mr. Holman, probably induced by the accounts of Cooke's warm reception, intended to visit America. “ I came away, sir, without preparation,” said Cooke : “ without my stage-clothes, without my books—as if I was running away by stealth from my creditors—like a criminal flying from the laws of his country. Now, Holman will come out after making every preparation ; after making a bargain by which he will put that money into his own pocket which I am putting into the pockets of men who treat me as if I was an idiot.”

Accordingly, in 1812, Mr. Holman and his amiable and accomplished daughter arrived. Between the landing-place and his hotel, looking up at the corner, as all persons of his profession are apt to do, he saw his own play of *Abroad and at Home* announced as the play of the evening. It was a curious coincidence, and hailed by him as a lucky omen.

We witnessed Mr. Holman's first appearance before a London audience in the autumn of 1784. He played Romeo to the Juliet of Miss Younge. He was apparently twenty-one years of age, and remarkably handsome. The Juliet was only young in name, and not by any means a beauty; but she was so fine an actress that the discrepancy was not observed—or only for the moment. The next winter his Romeo had a Juliet better suited in youth and beauty, and even greater than the first in all the requisites for the impassioned maid—Miss Brunton, known to Americans as Mrs. Merry; and in the mean time, Pope, Mr. Holman's rival in the young heroes of tragedy, had taken his first Juliet to the altar.

We saw Mr. Holman in many characters at that period, from 1784 to 1787, and particularly remember his excellent personification of Chamont, in *The Orphan*.

Mr. Holman's reasons for leaving London for Dublin are recorded in English dramatic history. When he arrived on our shores he brought letters to many gentlemen of distinction, among which was the following to Dr. Hosack, who has kindly permitted us to insert it.

London, Great Windmill-street, July 1, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

Presuming upon our having been fellow-students in the Anatomical school in Great Windmill-street, to which I succeeded on the retirement of Dr. Baillie and death of Mr. Cruikshank, that I am not unknown to you, I take the liberty of introducing a very particular friend of mine to your acquaintance, and am sure, as a stranger in America, he will receive from you all those attentions which your countrymen are so well known to pay to dramatic merit and to respectable and honourable men. Mr. Holman, who will deliver to you this letter, was, when you were in London, the first actor in Covent Garden theatre; with his professional character you must therefore be well acquainted. He has been offered such terms to visit your country that induce him to take with him his daughter, and they mean to exercise their professional talents for some time. I beg to say that you will find him a most honourable and well-educated man; he is a fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, and is connected with some of the first families in this kingdom. He is quite a stranger in your city, and I shall feel most particularly obliged by every attention you may have it in your power to show him, and shall be most happy to return them to any of your friends visiting this country. Dr. Baillie, Mr. Home, and most of your old friends are well; but to Mr. Holman I refer you for any news this part of the world produces. I have this summer made an arrangement for receiving Mr. Charles Bell as a partner in teaching anatomy, as my business now prevents me taking the whole concern on myself.

I am, my dear sir,

With great respect,

Your very obedient servant,

JAMES WILSON.

Of this gentleman Reynolds gives the following anecdote, connected with a club of which he was a member. In this literary club they had a rule that every member, on publishing a literary composition, should give a dozen of claret to the club. Topham, Merry, Morton, Rogers, Reynolds, Andrews, regularly paid the fine: but the "choice spirits of the

club" asserted that Wilson should pay the penalty for an advertisement announcing the commencement of his course of lectures, and, by a majority of votes, it was decided that the advertisement was a literary composition, and the unwilling author was compelled to pay the fine.

In connexion with this slight notice of Mr. Holman and his daughter, we must not omit to notice again the ephemeral existence of what was entitled the Theatrical Commonwealth.

An association under this title, at the head of which was Mr. Twaits, commenced their performances in New-York on the 3d of November, 1813 at a theatre fitted up for the purpose, which had been built as a circus, and stood at the corner of White-street and Broadway, on the east side of the latter street. The members of the commonwealth were Mr. and Mrs. Twaits, Mr. and Mrs. Burke, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, Messrs. Robinson, Waring Fennell, jun., Caulfield, Anderson, Jacobs, Ringwood, and Mrs. Goldson.

Mr. and Miss Holman commenced playing at the opening of this new theatre, and were to have a share of the profits and a benefit for each. The managers of the Park theatre, in order to distress the commonwealth, and aware of the consequences of withdrawing Miss Holman from the association, or obliging the concern to increase her compensation, offered her an engagement for seven nights, at two hundred dollars a night. Twaits immediately engaged her on the same terms, and Mr. Holman generously volunteered

his own services, and to prolong the period of the performances until the terms of the engagement could be fulfilled.

Bernard and Dwyer both played a few nights. The house continued open until the 9th of January, 1814, when the commonwealth removed to Philadelphia and opened the old Southwark playhouse as we have elsewhere mentioned.

Mr. Holman's *Lord Townley*, and the *Lady Townley* of Miss Holman, have been considered among the perfections of the art histrionic. In 1813, this gentleman and lady played with success at the Chestnut-street theatre, Philadelphia, on which occasion Doctor Hosack thus writes to his friend in that city.

*An Introductory Letter from Dr. Hosack to his friend in
Philadelphia.*

DEAR SIR,

I beg leave to introduce to your acquaintance my friend, Mr. Holman, who, with his daughter, proceeds to Philadelphia to pass a few weeks—fame has gone before them—it is therefore unnecessary for me to say any thing that can add to the favourable opinion you must already entertain of them. Both Mr. and Miss Holman have been very cordially received in this city; we part with them with great reluctance, and shall gladly welcome their return.

Mr. Holman unites with his high professional character the advantages of education and the accomplishments of a gentleman. Mr. Holman is a fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, and is connected with some of the first families of Great Britain, and has ever enjoyed the best society. Miss Holman you will also find a very interesting woman, and in her professional character is universally esteemed. She possesses more of the accomplishments and manner of Miss Farren than I have met with. Miss H's Lady Townley

is one of the finest pieces of acting I have ever witnessed, with the exception of her great prototype just mentioned.

Your attentions will greatly oblige,

Dear sir,

Your friend,

DAVID HOSACK.

Unfortunately, Mr. Holman embarked in an opposition theatre in Philadelphia, in Walnut-street, and did not succeed. He afterward went to Charleston, South Carolina, and, after conducting that theatre one season very much to the satisfaction of the public, went to England for additional performers. He brought out as a singer a lady of great talent, and of distinguished beauty and merit, whom he shortly afterward married; and, while at Rockaway, on Long Island, died suddenly. His death gave occasion to the following letter, which is one among many testimonies of the high estimation in which this accomplished gentleman was held.

To Doctor David Hosack.

Charleston, September 6th, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

The melancholy and afflicting intelligence of the death of my revered friend, the late Joseph George Holman, Esq. reached me a few days since. No event of my life has ever excited so deep and unaffected a sensation of grief. Connected to him by the warmest ties of friendship, and happy in the certainty of an affection on his part as disinterested as it was noble and ingenuous, his premature and unexpected dissolution has overwhelmed me with the bitterest sorrow. My acquaintance with him commenced a few weeks after his arrival in this city, in the fall of the year 1815. Though short, it was crowded with the improvement of years, and with recollections that can never fade from my heart. The supe-

riority of his mind, the suavity of his manners, the goodness of his heart, added to the high and chivalric honour of his feelings, secured at once my admiration and esteem. Upon a closer intimacy, I loved him with the most permanent affection. I regarded him as a parent, and I feel persuaded from the interest he exhibited upon every occasion touching my advancement in life, that he felt for me all the solicitude of so tender a relation. Believe me, sir, I do not use these terms as the common-place expressions of ordinary grief. My heart bleeds when I recall the many endearing hours we have passed together. It feels as if a link were stricken from the chain that binds it to existence *now that he is no more*. Judge then with what agony of feeling I have heard the death of a friend around whose melancholy and untimely tomb so many recollections hover. God protect and comfort those who stand in a more intimate relation than even that of friendship.

Although personally a stranger to you, sir, I claim the privilege of this introduction, which I pray you to pardon, as well from the circumstance of your having professionally attended him in his last illness, as from the long-established reputation you enjoy—we look to such men with veneration, though unknown, and humanity has a kind of prescriptive right to approach them with the same freedom that strangers are permitted to enter our habitations, to derive the information they require, and share our hospitality and kindness; there is something in my heart that whispers me you will not refuse me the favour of an answer.

You must be aware, my dear sir, that every circumstance, even the most minute, respecting the cause, approach, progress, and final determination of his distressing malady, will afford me some consolation at least. It is painful indeed beyond expression, to know how so dear, so very dear a friend died, under the pressure of so fatal and so melancholy an affection; yet there is some comfort even in its dismal relation. It is like extracting a bullet; we writhe under the operation, but feel somewhat more composed after its removal, though the wound may be equally as painful.

I am truly sorry, my dear sir, even for a moment to interrupt your useful and important avocations with the recital and petition of my personal sorrows: I pray you to pardon me, and attribute this liberty to the excitement of a feeling too stubborn to be subdued. It will be a proud moment to me, if that moment shall ever arrive, when I can personally declare to Dr. Hosack my respect and venera-

tion for both his mind and heart. It will be a feeble tribute, truly, but I am sure of one thing, it will not want sincerity. God preserve you, sir, many years, to extend the circle of your usefulness. I am, very respectfully and sincerely,

Your most obedient servant,

EDWIN C. HOLLAND.

CONCLUSION.

A CONTINUATION of American theatrical history would be rich in biographical subjects. Cooke, Kean, Macready, Forrest, Wallack, Conway, Hamblin, Barnes, Bartley, Gilfert, Rock, Kelly, Fisher, Hilson, Kemble, Mathews, Caldwell, Maywood, Barry, Placide, Hackett, Sharpe, Malibran, Austin—but why go on with the catalogue? The field is perhaps too wide; and although the writer of this volume alone possessed much of the information it contains, there are many who are more fully in possession of recent events and facts—more intimately acquainted with the characters of those who now possess or have recently passed over the American stage, than one whose pursuits have for years diverted his attention in part from the drama and its adherents.

As we have gone beyond the bounds prescribed, by mentioning some of those actors who flourished in America after the arrival of Cooke, we may be excused for paying our respects to two distinguished men of the histrionic profession, on the ground of their being natives of the soil. The one has taken his stand as a leader of the high, and the other of the low

drama. We allude to Messrs. Forrest and Hackett. Ample biographical notices of both these gentlemen belong to a continuation of the history of the drama in this country, and will be interesting to the reader and honourable to the subjects. At this time, and in this place, we merely mention them to pay our respects *en passant*.

The very great success and distinguished talents of Mr. Forrest entitle him to an ample portion of the time and attention of the future historians of the American stage. Of Mr. Hackett's talents in public and worth in private life we have more intimate and personal knowledge. We have been the witness of his talent for imitation, and pleased by his accurate delineation of the manners and peculiarities of American low life, which, though full of absurdities, is free from the disgusting characteristics of the European. There are three distinct species of clown in our country, the descendants of English, Low Dutch, and German emigrants. In all these Mr. Hackett is *true* and *original*. In that compound monster which is found on our western frontiers we are told he has been as successful in the representation as Mr. Paulding has been in the sketching. Mr. Hackett's success has been proportionate to the enterprise and observation he has evinced. He has been from his debut a star. Without regular training, or the toil of *working up* in a company of comedians, he has seized the crown at a leap, and may say with Richard, "I am myself alone."

It is to two American actors, Messrs. Forrest and

Hackett, that we are indebted for (what we hope may become a custom) the encouraging American dramatists by offering liberal remunerations for works of talent. The managers of our theatres, while they are such as they have been, looking only to the treasury, calculate to procure their new plays at eighteen pence a piece. They are not even obliged, as the London directors are, to employ translators or playwrights, hired by the month, to produce dramas to order. The London translator suits the French piece to the market, fits it to the taste of a royal theatre and loyal audience, or the caprice of an English manager ; and it must be given to us in America in the same shape, however mutilated or deformed, because it is cheap. To employ an American to suit the foreign piece to the feelings of republicans, or to give it as originally suited to the atmosphere of Paris, would cost more than the price of the English pamphlet, or the manuscript purloined by the prompter. We owe to Messrs. Forrest and Hackett an example, and we believe a successful one, which may induce even managers to call forth the latent talent of the country, and raise up a patriotic drama.

To return to Mr. Hackett—and not to be too serious when speaking of a comedian, we will consider another debt which his country owes him. He has identified himself with the American stage, therefore we go out of our way to notice him, and overleap a chronological line which we had drawn as our limits, within which he does not fall by many years. We hope we shall be excused, and that those who

may justly feel that they are entitled as actors to as much or more attention, will remember that as an American, the writer of this history has obligations to Mr. Hackett outweighing all ordinary considerations. We have noticed his claim upon us for exhibiting the peculiarities of the clowns of the New World ; but we are indebted to him for more than plays or encouragement of playwrights in the way of amusement and improvement. An actor was introduced to the Western World by Mr. Hackett, who is also, like himself, " himself alone," and in himself a host. We mean that most entertaining and instructing performer and philosopher—*Punch*. Punch, an ingenious French author has said—nay demonstrated—is at least as old as the globe we inhabit. The memory of man does not go back to the time when Punch *was not* ; and the earliest records prove the past existence of Punch. But although Asia, Europe, and Africa, were at all times blessed by his presence, his ubiquity was not perfect. America did not know Punch. The patriotism of Mr. Hackett remedied the defect. The representative of the American clown went to Europe, and Punch followed in his train on his return. Punch is not only the most popular of all actors, but in himself a play—and not only a play, but, as the shell and the shell-fish are one, a play-house—stage, scenes, and curtain, author, player, prompter, orchestra, and singer—a *star* dimming the lustre of all other stars—the only theatrical star who is independent of managers and theatres, being in himself actor, manager, and theatre. But Americans had not refinement

enough to relish Punch, and, disgusted with democracy, he returned, like other mistaken Whig travellers, to the hereditary orders of Europe and to European refinement.

Mrs. Trollope, another European traveller, finds America deficient in many things. She laments that there is no established church and no Punch. The natural consequences following from their absence are revivals and camp-meetings, inordinate eating and drinking, melancholy contentment in the women, and in the men ignorance, dollar-hunting, and spitting. A king, lords, established church, and Punch, would remedy all this. We admire Mrs. Trollope's book, and recommend it to our readers as entertaining and instructive, full of truth, and replete with novelties to the inhabitant of America. We say Mrs. Trollope, although it is evident that Captain Basil Hall wrote both the book and the review of it in the *English Quarterly*. If any one doubts, let him call to mind the extreme sensitiveness of the lady and the captain—their tender fears lest the American generals, colonels, and majors, should cut their mouths;—the dread of edge-tools identifies the lady and the captain-reviewer. Be that as it may, we like the book, whether Mrs. Trollope is a captain in his Britannic Majesty's navy or an old woman. But we have not yet done with Punch.

We doubt not but those patriots who introduced the Italian Opera into America will be immortalized in the history of the march of mind, yet their title to the gratitude of posterity is much less than his who

introduced Punch. It is strange, but true, that neither the one nor the other appeared suited to our state of society. It is only when men have attained to a refinement of the highest character that those exhibitions can be relished which are above making appeal to the understanding. Another attempt is making to establish the Italian Opera, and if it succeeds, Punch will return. In the mean time let us listen to Shakspeare in his own language, and if possible, be patient under the matrimonial lessons of Sir Charles and Lady Racket, Sir Peter and Lady Teazle, or Lord and Lady Townley, until Punch and his wife Joan make a second appearance.

We resume the grave style which becomes us on making our bow to the courteous reader who has accompanied us through some hundred pages, and doubtless parts from us with regret.

Let us not be supposed inimical to the opera. Though ignorant of music, we delight in it. The opera-house combines all the magic of sweet sound, as the picture-gallery exhibits the magic of the pencil. Music and painting, when combined with the theatre of a country, are subordinates—poetry is the mistress. But in the opera-house and the picture-gallery, music and painting are the “leading gods,” and poetry is an accessory.

We have promised ourselves and our readers some remarks on the causes of the deterioration of the drama. It has been suggested that the perfection to which acting has been carried, with its accompaniments of costume, music, and scenery, has been in-

jurious to the drama, by withdrawing attention from the poet to the player, the painter, and the machinist. Can it be supposed that the perfection to which players have attained in representing the author's images should cause the skilful writer to turn his efforts from the drama to compositions for the closet? It is the necessities and cupidity of managers, and the absence of wholesome regulations in theatres, that cause the lover of literature rather to depend upon the closet than the stage. In France the theatre is protected and supported by the government. Mr. Harris, the proprietor of Covent Garden theatre, tells us, that "the performers are not 'his majesty's servants,' but they may be said to be the servants of the constituted authorities." One theatre alone, he says, costs the government more than "thirty thousand pounds sterling per annum." We will not repeat what we have said on this subject, but we are confident that this control may be exercised at little expense, (probably none,) and the cause of literature, which is the cause of humanity, essentially served. If the expenses of the national theatre should exceed the receipts, let it be supplied by increased taxes on taverns and tippling houses.

It may be that, as men have advanced in civilization, refinement, and knowledge, the theatre, necessary to their progress at an early period, ceases to be so. This may be true as it respects those who are of the highest, the most refined grade—the capital of the Corinthian column of society. But the mass of mankind yet want every aid in rising to the level which

republican governments make necessary for those who are henceforward to be self-guided and self-ruled—the people.

When we speak of the theatre of America, we mean the drama of the country. A theatre is used synonymously with a playhouse. But the theatre of a country may be its loftiest and most efficient literature, when its play-houses may be, as in England, unhappily at present, and in a less degree in America, (though soon we hope in no respect whatever,) the open marts of vice and portals to destruction. We should as soon think of confounding the church of a country with the tabernacles where folly, madness, and blasphemy, preside, as its theatre with the saloons and bar-rooms of a play-house. ‘

If, as we believe, the world is to be in future a democratic world, and the people thereof hereafter to be governed by those who form and compose the nation; by those whose interest it is that peace and good-will among men should exist, and not by those who have considered men as their property to be used or abused for their pleasure—in short, if mankind are to govern themselves, as we know they ought to do, and as we believe they will—it is expedient that every source of knowledge should be opened to the governors, *the people*, every obstacle to their improvement removed, and every inducement held forth to qualify them for the high office they are destined to fill. If, in the progress to that high state of moral perfection enjoyed by the favoured few who prefer the lessons of wisdom taught in the closet to those received in public assem-

blies, another state less refined must be passed through—a state in which the attractions of oratory or even scenic decorations are useful—let us give to theatres that purity, as well as power, which shall produce the high moral purpose here aimed at.

To conclude our conclusion. We have endeavoured to trace the growth of the drama in our country from the time the shoot was planted in the soil to the maturity of the tree. We have seen it flourish in vigour, and put forth branches in every direction. It may be feared that worms in the bark, not the root, may cause decay.

We have compared the theatre to a mighty engine. It is such. We have shown how that engine was introduced among us. We have endeavoured to state facts that may guide others in their efforts to make this mode of diffusing knowledge a blessing to society. We have spoken of men, connected with the stage, as we have found them, always remembering that there is no “palace whereinto sometimes foul things intrude not.” We have noticed individuals and circumstances unworthy of record only as links in the chain of historical events. We have interspersed reflections as they were suggested by the subject matter, and ventured to propose a project for the improvement of the drama. The drama *will* exist in good or evil repute, to guide or mislead, whether legislators will it or not. The people will have it so. The choice of the legislator is only to render that beneficial which may be made otherwise.

We might have been more particular in describing the manner of certain great actors in delivering well-

known passages from the works of the established dramatists, or delineating certain characters in well-known plays; and if this work is received favourably, and a History of the American Theatre to the present time required, we may yet do so.

A review of the dramatic works which have been produced to this day in our country, and a due reprobation of much vile trash which has disgraced the stage and the press, would be useful.

A comparison between the actors of the time past, by one who knew their merits and faults, with those who have succeeded them, and a candid criticism on many excellent performers now before the public, in our widely extended and extending republic, would serve the cause of literature and the arts.

We have seen the rise and the fall of many, in every pursuit and profession. The great cause that renders vain the ability of the individual in one is the same in all—vicious indulgence—either the indulgence of sensuality and idleness, or of inordinate vanity and cupidity. We say “renders vain the ability of the individual”—many fail from utter inability in every pursuit.

One great theatre in each great city of the Union, supported and guided by the state, would remedy every evil attendant on our present play-house system. We should then have no managers seeking *only* to fill the treasury, or pay hungry creditors—no stars rendering all attraction but that of novelty unprofitable—no benefit plays tempting actors to exceed their stated and certain income, and to descend to practices, for the purpose of gaining *patrons*, which tend to

disgrace their profession, and sometimes end in destroying themselves—no display of impudent vice before the stage, or of immoral precept upon it. A theatre, so supported and conducted, must exhibit plays not less attractive for the purpose of mere amusement, and not less popular, but like the novels of Walter Scott, and James Fenimore Cooper, incomparably more fascinating, as well as instructive, than much of the trash of the stage or the circulating library of former days. Actors, however witty, would not be indulged in extemporary effusions or expletives, but speak “that which is set down for them.”

When we speak of a theatre supported by the state, or by a powerful association, we do not mean that the state should prohibit others, or discourage others, any further than such a theatre must have a preference over any that cannot rival it by the exhibition of talent in plays and performers. When plays are not submitted to the decision of the ignorant or the interested, they may be written by the first in the land, and the best in the land will attend their representation. When the director is paid by the state, he will not be a manager who has debts to liquidate or coffers to fill, and actors may be well remunerated. The stage-manager should always be an actor, relieved from the duties of acting, and the prompter should be an intelligent gentleman. This would be a kind of theatrical millennium—we hope the scheme is not altogether Utopian. What has been done, may be done; and again we refer to France and Germany.

The enemies of the drama have misrepresented it; they have stigmatized the theatre, and cast every term

of reproach upon it, through successive ages ; and if good name is taken from man he may become reckless of his conduct when “ the immediate jewel of his soul is filched from him.” If the profession were considered honourable, as in justice it ought to be, persons would be educated for it as for other honourable professions, and as they are for the French theatre. Of course the evil of youth abandoning their homes and their parents would cease—or, if theatres were conducted as we have suggested, no youth would be permitted to tread the stage without the parents’ sanction.

By those who have considered the actor’s calling a good and reputable one, children have been trained to it, and are among the best and worthiest, as artists and members of society.

If the theatre is represented as the scene of licentiousness, the licentious will seek it. And if, as now in most theatres, they see a display of the votaries and victims of vice in one part of the house, and the allurements to inebriation in another, they may have just grounds to believe that they are indeed in the palace of Circe, instead of the temple of the Muses. The frail or the vicious must be admitted to every temple, but not when they are openly marked and arrayed as such. If not known, their power of evil is abridged, and the disposition to it may be changed. We advocate no abuse, but earnestly wish reform:—that *that*, which is in itself good, may be the means of good. It was the triumph of learning over her barbarous foes that reared the stage ; let us not aid those barbarous foes in their attempts to destroy it.

A P P E N D I X.

REGULATIONS OF THE THEATRE FRANCAIS,

ESTABLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

ONE hundred thousand francs per year is allowed by the government for the support of the *Theatre Français*. A franc is about 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents.

SUPERINTENDENT.—An officer of government has the direction of the theatre, and his orders are transmitted to the actors by another officer, called a commissioner, who is to superintend the administration, and the financial concerns. This commissioner must personally give all orders, and is personally responsible for the carrying into effect the same. In case of violation of the rules, it is the duty of the commissioner to report to the superintendent. His other duties will be mentioned below.

ASSOCIATES.—The ACTORS are united in a society. The associates employ salaried actors.

SHARES.—The receipts of all exhibitions, after deducting expenses, are divided into twenty-four shares: one share for contingencies; but if not called for, (or any surplus remaining,) it is divided at the end of the year among the associates.

A half-share is appropriated to augment the pension-fund; and another half-share is appropriated to repairs, scenery, wardrobe, and properties.

The twenty-two remaining shares are divided among the associate actors, from the eighth of a share to a whole share.

Every associate contracts an engagement to perform twenty years ; and, after twenty years of uninterrupted service, is at liberty to retire, unless the superintendent thinks it advisable that he or she should be retained. The associate so retiring has a right—first, to a pension for life of 2,000 francs, from the appropriation of 100,000 francs made by government ;—and, secondly, to a like sum from the funds of the society, which are supplied by the half-share mentioned above, and other sources. Thus, the actor retires upon a pension for life of 4,000 francs per year. Here permanency and respectability are secured.

If the superintendent prolongs the service of an associate beyond the twenty years, there is added, whenever he or she retires, 100 francs more for each year of added service from each of the above funds ; that is, 200 francs is added to the pension of 4,000, on retiring, for each year of service beyond the twenty originally contracted for.

If an associate should be compelled by any accident arising immediately from the service of the theatre, to retire before the end of the twenty years, he or she shall receive the full pension of 4,000 francs. (About 750 dollars.)

In case of incapacity to serve, resulting from any other cause, the associate may retire upon a pension of 200 francs for each year he or she may have served, if amounting to ten years, provided such associate held a whole share ; or 150 if only three-fourths of a share, and so on in proportion to the share held by the associate in the profits of the society. [I do not find in what manner the shares and parts of shares are divided among the associates : we must conjecture that it is according to the talents of the individual.]

If the associate has served less than ten years, the superintendent shall propose to the government such pension as he may deem just.

For the payment of these pensions, the government, as above

said, provides 100,000 francs per year, and 50,000 francs per year are drawn by monthly drafts from the receipts, and placed in safe keeping at interest. No associate can transfer or mortgage his or her contribution to the funds of this income. On the retirement or the death of an associate, the reimbursement of the capital of this reservation is made to such associate, or his or her heirs, proportionably to the amount of his or her contribution. Thus, the actor retires not only on the pension above mentioned, but on an immediate payment of the money he or she has loaned to the fund.

Any associate who shall quit the theatre without permission from the superintendent forfeits all claims upon the fund, either for pension or repayment of money contributed.

Should there be any balance remaining after the annual payment of the pensions, it is disposed of for the benefit of the society, under the sanction of the superintendent.

SALARIED ACTORS.—Besides the associates, the theatre may have salaried actors; and in case such salaried actor shall serve twenty years, or only ten years if accident in service prevents further service, a pension may be given by the government's superintendent, from the above fund, not exceeding half the income the actor may have received during the three last years of his or her service. The same rule extends to the commissioner on his retiring, only that his pension must be solely taken from the fund supplied by the government.

COMMITTEE OF ADMINISTRATION.—We have said the commissioner is to superintend the administration of the society. It is provided that a committee of six male associates, presided over by the commissioner, and having a secretary, shall be the administrators. They shall be appointed by the commissioner yearly: three of these six are charged with the execution of the resolutions of the committee.

The duties of this committee are, to make out each year an estimate of the presumed expenses; to give orders for purchases and drafts for payments; to inspect every department of the establishment, as well the audience part of the house as the work-rooms, and the treasury, with the payment of pen-

sions, shares, salaries, and every branch of the financial concerns.

TREASURER.—There must be a treasurer employed, who must give ample security. The receipts and expenditures are adjusted monthly, and approved by the committee. In making payments, this is the order: First, the share of author; next, salaries of actors and wages of workmen; then the sum named for the pension fund; lastly, all bills. The residue of the receipts to be divided as above. The treasurer will receive quarterly the money appropriated by government, to be applied as above stated. The treasurer's accounts are to be submitted to the associates, and must, before acceptance, be approved by the superintendent.

Upon the share held in reserve for contingencies, the superintendent may grant to actors or actresses assistance in respect to dresses which may fall too heavy or flimsy, according to circumstances.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—The committee must call a general assembly of the associates once a year, to decide on the expenses of the coming year, and once to examine the accounts of the preceding year; and likewise every time there are funds to put out, lawsuits to be sustained, or any extraordinary occurrence needing it. The superintendent may convoke the associates at his pleasure for business of the society.

The committee are charged with every thing relative to management, making a list of stock pieces, regaling, delivery and reception of new pieces, under the control of the commissioner and superintendent.

LINES OF ACTING.—The superintendent determines the lines of acting. He draws up an estimate of pieces to be studied, names the actors and actresses who are to play as principals, doubles, or thirds, assigning the parts according to the respective line and seniority. No performer can hold as principal two different lines, without permission of the superintendent—rarely granted. A performer in possession of a line as principal, wishing to act in another line, such actor or

actress can only do so as second, even though senior to the person first in possession.

STOCK PLAYS.—When the committee form the stock-list, they must have added to them two of the associate actresses. This list must be so arranged that each part may have a second or double specified, to perform it in case of the absence of the principal.

Two associates, in rotation, are added to the committee each week, to assist in the direction.

If a double should fall sick, the principal, if in health, must take his character on notice from one of the committee. No principal may refuse a part in his line, or resign one altogether to his double. The principals must yield all or any of their parts to their doubles occasionally, or at least three or four times a month, that the doubles (who are actors on probation) may have an opportunity for improvement, and give an opportunity to judge of their progress. If deprived of this opportunity, the double may appeal to the superintendent; and those who have injured him may be fined 300 francs for such opposition to his right, and the commissioner is held responsible for any injustice done to the double by his negligence.

The association are bound to bring out a full piece every month, and two lesser pieces, either new or revived. Among these must be the works of living authors.

ALL THE ACTORS must be assembled once a week to receive notice of performances, and a programme of the week's business is delivered to each. If any performer makes objection to the intended business, their reasons for such objection must be addressed to the commissioner, to be determined on by the superintendent. The arrangement for the succeeding performances once determined, each performer will be expected to act the part placed opposite his or her name, under a penalty of 150 francs, unless sufficient cause is shown to the superintendent. If any performer has caused a performance to be changed on a plea of illness, and shall be seen out of his or her house, the fine is 300 francs.

DEBUTS.—The superintendent alone can give permission for a *debut*. The permission is presented to the committee, who register it, and place in the next week's performance the three pieces required by the person so permitted. The performers having parts in these pieces will not be permitted to refuse acting, under a penalty of 150 francs. A general rehearsal of each new piece, in which a *debutant* is to play, is insisted on, the forfeit for absence twenty-five francs. The committee will afterwards propose, and the superintendent elect, other parts for the *debutant*. He will then have several private rehearsals, and one general rehearsal for each part. A successful *debutant* is received upon probation for not less than one year, and then the superintendent has power to receive him or her as an associate.

NEW PIECES are to be read before a committee of nine, selected from the associates of longest standing by the superintendent. A majority of votes decides the reception. If part of the vote is for sending back the piece for correction, the question is taken by yeas and nays: if there are but four votes for sending it back, it is accepted.

THE SHARE OF AN AUTHOR from the receipts, one-third being first deducted for expenses, is one-eighth for a piece of five or four acts; one-twelfth for a piece in three; and one-sixteenth for a piece of one or two. Nevertheless, the actors and authors make other arrangements to suit circumstances. The author enjoys his free admission to the house from the moment the piece is put in rehearsal: and for three years after the first representation of a piece of five or four acts; two years for one of three; and one year for a piece in one or two. The author of two pieces of five or four acts, or three pieces of three acts, or four pieces in one or two acts, remaining on the stage, is entitled to his free admission for life.

THE PENALTIES that may be imposed on an actor are for causing a piece to be changed, or refusing to perform a part in his line, or if not at his post at the hour appointed; and are, according to the gravity of the case, fines, exclusion from



the assemblies of associates and committee of administration, temporary or final expulsion from the theatre, forfeiture of pension, and *imprisonment*. These penalties are imposed by the committee in the mildest degree, and by the superintendent in the harshest, with the concurrence of the committee. No performer can be absent without permission from the superintendent, and never more than two at a time, nor for more than two months.

RETIRING FROM THE STAGE.—If an associate, after ten years' service, applies more than once in one year for permission to retire, and declares his intention never more to perform, he is permitted to retire; but he will have no right to any pension, nor to withdraw his share from the fund of 50,000 francs.

If the company does not perform every evening, unless excused by the superintendent, they pay for each time of omission 500 francs to the poor.

BENEFITS.—Any associate who has served thirty years may have a benefit on his retiring. Any actor who retires from the Theatre Français is not permitted to play any where else without permission of the superintendent.

The internal regulation of the theatre depends on the superintendent.

STUDENTS are by law attached to the theatre,—nine of each sex, not under fifteen years of age.

TEACHERS are appointed in music, declamation, grammar, history, mythology, and the dramatic art.

If a student gives no promise, he or she is withdrawn, and another substituted. These students may be permitted to try their strength at inferior or minor theatres, sanctioned by the superintendent of the T. F. When deemed capable, they are permitted to make a *debut* as above at the T. F. The expenses of these students and salaries of their teachers are paid by the government.

In addition to these laws for the government of the theatre, we give an abridged translation of the superintendent's *Regu-*

lations for the internal administration of the Theatre Français.

THE COMMITTEE must meet every Wednesday at one o'clock. Extra meetings are called by the commissioner. All letters intended for the committee are addressed to the commissioner, who is the presiding officer, and he takes the votes of the committee on all questions discussed. When the votes are equal, the opinion of the commissioner decides. If a question interests a member of the committee, he must withdraw. This rule applies likewise to questions before the general meetings. The resolutions of the committee must be signed by every member, however he may have voted.

THE GENERAL MEETINGS of the associates take place at ten o'clock, and none but members can be present. No subjects can be discussed but those for which the meeting is called. Decisions by vote, as in the committee. All decisions are registered, and signed by all present.

STOCK-LIST.—The committee which makes out the stock-list, or list of acting plays, must assemble every Saturday at noon. This is the ordinary committee, with the addition of two associates, as *semainiers*, or weekly directors. If an actor wishes a day for particular business, he must write to the committee or the directors before the time of meeting. The list of plays to be acted shall be formed in such manner that tragedy and comedy shall be alternated. When the committee shall have made out the list of plays for the succeeding week, they next distribute the parts according to the laws of the theatre. All shall then be placed with the directors to communicate to the general assembly. Revived pieces must be distributed to the principals and their doubles, so that if the principal is not ready at the time fixed, the double may perform the part. Every actor who performs as a double or third in a piece when first played, has a right to perform that part twice in succession.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the actors for receiving the list of pieces for the next week must convene at one o'clock every Saturday. Every associate who shall be on the spot when the

green-room clock strikes one, and shall remain until the sitting is over, shall receive a token of six francs. This makes it necessary that the roll shall be called over at one o'clock and at the conclusion of business.

When the list of plays shall have been made known, and sanctioned according to the rules prescribed, the weekly directors shall make no change, except authorized by the committee, under a penalty of one hundred and fifty francs. If an actor, on any pretext whatever, shall, after the above meeting, refuse to perform the part assigned to him, he must pay one hundred and fifty francs.

OF CHANGING A PLAY.—If, from any legitimate cause, the weekly directors shall be obliged to change any arrangement of the list, without having time to refer the subject to the committee, they must make a written report to the commissioner, under penalty of fifty francs; and this report must be instantly sent to the superintendent for his decision. Any actor who, without legitimate cause, shall occasion the closing of the theatre, shall be punished by a fine equal to the probable receipt of the intended representation, and even by severer penalty in case of repeating the offence, or of aggravating circumstances.

WEEKLY DIRECTORS.—No male associate (the senior excepted) can be excused from performing the duties of weekly director, under penalty of fifty francs; but if, from particular circumstances, unable to fulfil the duties, he may, by permission of the commissioner, be aided by another associate, who shall have the same authority. The weekly directors are bound so to consult each other, that in case of the absence of one, the other shall be present to fulfil the joint duties of the two. One of them must be at the theatre at six o'clock to see that every thing is ready, and all the actors who are to play are present. He is to see that the performance begins at the appointed time, and mark those who are not ready: the penalty for not being ready is ten francs if ten minutes after the time, and twenty if the actor causes a delay of fifteen minutes; for a longer delay, the superintendent has power to increase the penalty at

discretion, and also if the fault is repeated. Every actor is forbidden, under any pretext whatever, to make alterations or additions to his part. Should any circumstance require an address to the public during performance, it must be made by one of the weekly directors, or if they are absent, by the senior actor present, who shall use such terms as he may communicate to the commissioner, or to the committee, or to the oldest actors who shall happen to be in the theatre. Any circumstance which may occur that can be interesting to the government, must be communicated by the weekly directors in a written report to the commissioner, under a penalty of one hundred francs.

FUEL.—Every actor is allowed two francs for each day of performance for fuel.

The regulations respecting bills and advertisements provide that the directors make them out during the time of performing,—the names of the actors being inserted for every piece according to their rank of seniority; and it is the duty of the director to see that these notifications are sent to the printer and to the journalists. No actor can be announced separately on the bill, unless he has been absent at least two months from the theatre from some legitimate cause, and in that case only for the three first times of performance. If, from any cause whatever, an actor shall be substituted for one announced, the weekly directors must notify the change upon bills at the doors and in the hall of the theatre: and when the play announced is changed, it must be announced by the bills in like manner (the French says, by putting *bandeaux* on the bills; we presume a well-known signal.) If a sudden close of the house takes place, the notice must express the cause; and the directors are bound, under a penalty of one hundred francs each, to notify the police and the commander of the armed force (precautions happily not needed with us.) On all such occasions, the directors, under penalty of fifty francs each, must notify the superintendent by immediate report. When it is necessary to change the play, no actor can refuse to play in another piece, under a fine of one hundred francs;

and if he was to have played in the piece so put off or changed, the above fine is increased to three hundred francs.

REHEARSALS are to be notified when the list of plays for the ensuing week is made known, on each Saturday, as above. The hours must not be the same as those of the meetings of the committee or general assembly. Rehearsals so notified cannot be changed, except the cause is approved by the committee, under penalty of ten francs, to be paid by the person causing the change. Every actor absent from rehearsal at the moment of the scene in which he is to play is fined three francs. The fine is ten if absent the whole rehearsal. If absent from the next rehearsal of the same piece, twenty francs. For further offence, the superintendent may punish at will. The prompter is bound, under penalty of three francs, to return the absentees to the directors, they present it to the committee, whose duty it is to inflict the fines. The directors may admit strangers to rehearsals of old pieces, or stock-plays, but the permission of the *author of a new piece* must be obtained for that purpose, and then the actors must be notified thereof. An auditor disturbing a rehearsal, shall be immediately turned out.

THE SALARIED ACTORS must be present when the list of plays for each succeeding week is made known,—i. e. at the general assembly each Saturday; and at the end of three months admission or attendance, they will have a right to the token of three francs on the terms specified.

Every actor who is on trial, or on salary, must play any part cast for him or her, unless received upon other terms. Any salaried actor not re-engaged three months before the first of April, is at that time no longer a member of the company.

THE ORCHESTRA is placed under a leader, through whom the administration will transmit its orders. When a situation is vacant, the leader must report to the committee, who will appoint a successor. The leader must appoint those wanted for rehearsals, and they must attend, under a penalty of ten francs each. The musicians must be at the house at six

o'clock every evening, and in their department, ready to obey the signal for action. Any one missing an overture, must pay two and a-half francs—a whole performance, five francs. When the performance is once commenced, no musician can leave the orchestra, except from indisposition. No substitute can be received for a musician, except for reasons approved by the leader, and a notice of a day. Never more than two substitutes at a time can be allowed. Any musician failing in the respect due to the public during a representation, or to the actors on a stage, must pay ten francs; and for a repetition, be discharged. Every evening the leader shall report to the prompter, or to the weekly directors, any failure of duty, under penalty of being himself accountable for the fines incurred.

TICKETS AND DOORS.—Every thing relative to the offices for receipt and door keepers is under charge of an inspector-general. Officers called comptrollers are under him, the principal of whom takes his place in his absence. The tickets are entrusted to him. He must see that the offices are open one hour before the rising of the curtain, and that all the door keepers are at their posts. He must frequently, during the performance, go the rounds, to see that every one is in his place, and the number of tickets received.

SEASON BOXES.—An officer is employed to let out the boxes, which are to be taken for a year or shorter period, not under six months. He keeps a register and account of receipts, with the names of the lessees, periods for which they are let, &c., and this register must be exhibited to the inspector-general once a month. This register and account must be examined by a member of the committee. A register is likewise kept of boxes let for one evening. The tickets are given to the office-keepers under inspection of the inspector-general. There are many strict regulations to preserve order and prevent imposition. It appears that the openers of the boxes are females. Those boxes hired are marked as such by the openers, who are liable to fine if they mark as hired a box which is not taken. These openers have a list of boxes taken given to

them, by whom taken, &c. A comptroller, in the presence of the inspector, counts the tickets that are to be delivered to office-keepers. When delivered, an account signed by the comptroller is delivered with them, and he is bound at the commencement of the second piece, to examine and take account of the number of tickets sold.

No actor or actress can take tickets at the offices (*caisse*) even on paying for them, under the penalty of 300 francs for a first offence, and a punishment according to the superintendent's pleasure for a second. No comptroller, overseer, or office-keeper, shall deliver to any person a ticket before the opening of the ticket offices.

ORDERS.—Each associate is entitled to give or sell orders for two (upon the office only) for places in the first and second boxes, the orchestra, and the balconies, or the first gallery, except at representations of new pieces, or on evenings when new performers make *debuts*, or on any other occasion when the administration think proper to prohibit orders.

TICKETS.—More tickets shall never be given out than there are seats. On days of *debut*, the debutant is entitled to twelve places in front, *i. e.*, four in the pit, four in the orchestra or first boxes, and four in the second gallery, or third boxes.

The treasurer must attend every evening in his office. The ticket-office keepers must present to him their accounts, verified and signed by the inspector-general, and the amount of sales. The overseer of leased boxes must likewise account with and pay to him. All must give receipts, and their accounts must be settled every evening.

RIGHTS OF ACTORS.—Every associate, besides his two orders for free admission, is entitled to three seats for his relatives. An actor on trial, or a salaried actor, is only entitled to one seat or order for admission.

The two orders for free admission belonging to the associates may be sold by them, but not for less nor more than one year. The person having free admission must have a written order from two of the committee or the commissioner.

Admissions to relatives are suspended during the three first

performances of a new or revived piece, if the administration think fit. No admission of this kind can be sold, and only persons known as relatives can be entered on the list of admission as such. This list is prepared by the committee, and authorized by the commissioner, and no change made without his authority. The list of free admissions, whether of retired actors of the Theatre Français, or of authors, or of any persons having this privilege, is made out once a year, sanctioned by the superintendent, and unalterable but by his approbation.

Fines and penalties of expulsion are enforced against any comptroller, door-keeper, overseer, &c. who contravenes these rules.

The door communicating from the front to the interior is locked during the whole of the exhibition, and guarded by a sentinel and a servant of the theatre. This door shall not be opened until eight o'clock, and only for actors, their relatives, (having free admission,) and authors. A sentinel and a servant of the theatre are likewise posted at the door for entrance of actors, and only the same description of persons permitted to pass, and the necessary attendants.

THE POLICE OF THE INTERIOR, and of the wings, is entrusted to a particular officer appointed by the superintendent called the inspector, who shall be bound to see the above rules enforced. He shall have a list of all who are entitled to entrance, and if he finds any intruder, he must turn him out instantly. Any person attached to the theatre contravening these rules shall be fined ten francs for the first offence, twenty for the second, and lose his or her place for the third.

No orders for admission are allowed: if one is given it must be carried by the door-keeper to the cashier, and by him charged to the person signing it at the rate of six francs 60-100 for each seat.

RIGHTS OF AUTHORS AND RULES FOR READINGS. —To prevent all confusion respecting the rights of authors for priority of readings, reception, or representation, a register shall be kept of all authors who have works to read; of all works re-

ceived, and the names of their authors ; of all works returned for correction ; and of all works rejected, with the names of their authors. This register shall be under charge of the commissioner. A request for a reading must be made in writing to the committee by the author, or an associate for the author. No new piece can be read whose author has not already one work or more accepted, unless an associate certifies in writing that he has read it, and that it has merit entitling it to be heard. Every new author must send his work to the committee, who will have it examined ; if the examiner thinks it ought not to be admitted to a reading, he explains his reasons ; if the contrary, it is entered on the register for reading. There shall never be more than one reading in a week, except specially ordered by the superintendent. If, however, the piece is of two or three acts, another short piece may be read at the same time. Three pieces of one act may be read at one sitting. Friday is the day for readings, at one o'clock. No member of the reading committee can be excused except for legitimate reasons made known to the directors the day before. Authors or their representatives are alone admitted to the readings. Every work shall be read according to the register, except by special order of the superintendent. An author must be apprised of the time of reading his work eight days before, and if he is not ready the next on the list is substituted, and his work carried down to the bottom of the list. An author not wishing to read his work can have it read by any actor he chooses. After the reading, every member of the committee gives in his judgment in writing, always concluding with " I accept," " I accept for correction," or " I cannot accept." These opinions must be couched in decorous and cautious terms. The author has his choice, to hear these opinions read or to have the result sent to him, drawn up by the secretary. If an author agrees to make corrections, he is entitled to a second reading, on which occasion it must be accepted or rejected. This reading must take place as soon as the author is ready. Every piece accepted is registered with the name of the author or his re-

presentative. Every new piece shall be put in study in its turn of acceptance. The distribution of parts and the choice of doubles belongs to the author, but no actor can be compelled to go out of his line. If an actor shall, without consent of the superintendent, refuse a part in his line, cast by the author, he shall forfeit three hundred francs, and suffer farther punishment at the discretion of the superintendent, if he repeats the offence. No double is permitted in a new piece unless the principal has played it at least six times. An actor may, at the request of an author, play a new part out of his line, but when he ceases to play it, the part returns to its line, as adjudged by the committee.

During the six first nights of a piece of five or four acts, the author shall be allowed thirty seats, viz. twenty in the pit and ten in the first boxes. For pieces of three acts, twelve in the pit and eight in the first boxes. For pieces of one or two acts, ten in the pit and five in the first boxes. After the six first nights, the seats are reduced to six for a piece of five or four acts; four for a piece of three acts; and two for a piece of one or two.

Let all persons interested in the drama study these laws and regulations. Any manager or association who shall conduct a theatre on a similar plan, varying it according to circumstances, will avoid the abuses which have lowered the drama in the estimation of the world, and may raise it again to its proper level among the institutions which benefit the human race. It may then be truly deserving of the epithet bestowed upon it in the last of the following lines :

“ Time rushes o’er us ; thick as evening clouds
 Ages roll back ; what calls them from their shrouds ?
 What in full vision brings their good and great,
 The men whose virtues make the nation’s fate,
 The far, forgotten stars of human kind ?
 The STAGE—the MIGHTY TELESCOPE OF MIND ! ”

CATALOGUE

OF

AMERICAN PLAYS AND THEIR AUTHORS.*

ANONYMOUS.—*The Americans Roused, or a Cure for the Spleen*: printed 1775. *Guilt*; translated from the German. *The Ancient Day*. He was a Soldier at the Battle of North Point. *The Irish Patriot*. *Is it a lie?* *The Jubilee, or Triumph of Freedom*. *Julia, or the Wanderer*. *Life in New York, or Firemen on Duty*. *Love in a Cloud*. *Lucinda*. *The Green Mountain Boys*. *Greece and Liberty*. *Miontonomon*. New York and London. *The Poor Student*. *The Return from the Camp*. *Road to Honour*. *Rokeby*. *Ruffian Boy*. *Shakspeare in Love*; acted in Boston. *Sylla*; acted in New York. *A Tale of the Crusade*; a tragedy acted in New York. *Blow for Blow*; tragedy printed in Baltimore. *The Medium, or Happy Tea-party*; acted in Boston, 1795. *The Pilot*, and others from James F. Cooper's Novels.

BARKER, JAMES N.—*America*, a mask. *Attila*, tragedy. *The Embargo, or What News?* acted 1808. *Indian Princess*. *Tears and Smiles*; comedy, five acts. *How to try a Lover*. *Marmion*. *Travellers*. *The Ar-*

* To J. F. Foote, Esq. I am indebted for access to a collection of materials made by him for a new and improved *Biographia Dramatica*, the publication of which I hope will repay his labours.

- mourer's Escape. Superstition. All acted with great success.
- BARNARD—The Wilderness.
- BARTON, ANDREW—The Disappointment.
- BAYLEY—The Sultan.
- BEACH, L.—Jonathan Postfree.
- BIDDLE, BARNABY—The Mercenary Match; tragedy, acted at Yale College.
- BOOTH, LUCIUS JUNIUS—Ugolino; tragedy.
- BRAY, JOHN—The Toothache; farce.
- BRECK, CHARLES—The Trust. The Fox Chase.
- BROWN, JOHN PAUL—Sertorius; tragedy.
- BROWN, MRS.—The Pirate.
- BURGOYNE, GEN.—The Blockade of Boston; acted in Boston, during the blockade, by British officers..
- BURK, JOHN—Bunker's Hill. Joan of Arc. Death of Montgomery. Fortunes of Nigel. Innkeeper of Abbeville. Bethlehem Gabor. Female Patriotism. Which do you like best, the Poor Man or the Lord?
- CARR, MRS.—The Fair Americans.
- CHAPMAN, SAMUEL—Doctor Foster. Gasperoni.
- CLINCH, CHARLES P.—The Spy; from James Fenimore Cooper's Novel. The Avenger's Vow. The Expelled Collegian. The First of May in New York. All acted with distinguished success.
- COOPER AND GREY, DOCTORS—The Renegade.
- CRAFTS—The Sea Serpent.
- CROMWELL—The Ocean Spectre.
- CUSTIS, GEORGE WASHINGTON—Pocahontas.
- DA PONTI—The Italian Husband; tragedy; The Roman Wife; tragedy.
- DARLING, DAVID—Beaux without Belles; farce, acted in Petersburg, Va.
- DEARING, MRS.—Carabasset, tragedy; acted in Portland, 1831.
- DUMONT, J. B.—The invisible Witness; acted 1824.
- DUNLAP, WILLIAM.—The Modest Soldier; comedy. The

Father of an Only Child; acted in New York in 1788. The Miser's Wedding. Darby's Return; interlude. Lord Leicester; tragedy. William Tell, or the Archers; opera. Fontainville Abbey; tragedy. Ribbemont, or the Feudal Baron; tragedy. André; tragedy. Tell Truth and Shame the Devil; farce. The Natural Daughter; comedy. The Stranger; comedy. Lovers' Vows; comedy. Sterne's Maria, or the Vintage; opera. Count Benyowsky; tragi-comedy. Italian Father; comedy. False Shame; comedy. Force of Calumny; comedy. Wild-goose Chase; opera. The Robbery; drama. Fraternal Discord; comedy. Abælino. Where is He? farce. The Voice of Nature; drama. The Glory of Columbia her Yeomanry; play in five acts. Bonaparte in England; farce. The Proverb, or Conceit can kill, Conceit can cure; comedy. Lewis of Monte Blanco; play in five acts, The Wife of two Husbands. Peter the Great. The Blind Boy. Yankee Chronology; interlude. The Soldier of '76. La Pe-rouse. The Stranger's Birth Day, The Good Neighbour. Indians in England. The Merry Gardener; opera. Battle of New Orleans. Forty and Twenty; comedy. School for Soldiers. Rinaldo Rinaldini. The Flying Dutchman. Thirty Years, or the Life of a Gambler. A Trip to Niagara. The Knight of the Gualquiver; opera. Nina. The Knight's Adventure. Robespierre. The Africans; and other pieces unpublished. Most of these acted successfully.

ELLIS, MRS.—The Duke of Buckingham; acted unsuccessfully in New York.

ELLISON, JAMES—The American Captives, or the Siege of Tripoli; acted in Boston in 1812.

EWING, ROBERT W.—Le Solitaire. Sponge again. The Frontier Maid. The Highland Seer. The Election. Imperial Victim. La Fayette. Quentin Durward. Exit in a Hurry. Bride of Death.

FAUGERES, MARGARET V.—Belisarius; tragedy, printed 1795.

- FENNELL, JAMES—The Wheel of Truth. 621
- FIELD — France and Liberty. Rhyme without Reason; farce.
- FINN, HENRY J.—Montmorency, or the Falls of Montmorency.
- FOOT, J. F.—The Little Thief, or the Night Walker.
- FOSTER—The Inheritance.
- FOWLER, MANLY B.—The Prophecy. Orlando. Female Revenge.
- GODFREY, THOMAS (son of the inventor of the quadrant)—The Prince of Parthia; tragedy, printed at Philadelphia, 1765, in 4to. (written at the age of twenty-two.)
- GRICE, C. E.—The Battle of New Orleans.
- HALL, EVERARD—Nolens Volens, or the Biter Bit.
- HAMILTON, COL.—The Enterprise; opera acted in Baltimore, 1823.
- HARBY, ISAAC—Alberti; tragedy, in five acts, acted in Charleston, 1818. The Gordian Knot; tragedy. The author of this tragedy died in New-York, much regretted.
- HATTON, MRS.—Tammany.
- HAWKINS, M.—The Saw-mill.
- HENRY, JOHN—The School for Soldiers.
- HILLHOUSE, JAMES A.—Percy's Mask. Hadad.
- HODGKINSON, JOHN—The Man of Fortitude.
- HOLLAND, EDWIN C.—The Corsair.
- HUMPHREYS, DAVID—The Widow of Malabar; tragedy, and a comedy, name not known (never published.)
- HUTTON, JOSEPH—Cuffee and Duffee. School for Prodigals. Modern Honour. The Wounded Hussar. The Orphan of Prague. Fashionable Follies.
- HYER, WM. G.—Rosa; melo-drama, printed 1822.
- INGERSOLL, CHARLES JARED—Edwy and Elgiva; tragedy, acted in Philadelphia, 1801. Julian the Apostate; tragedy.
- INGHAM, JOHN—The Times. The Usurper; tragedy, acted in Philadelphia.

JOSE, WM.—Battle of Eutaw Springs; played in Charleston, 1817.

JUDAH, SAMUEL B.—A Tale of Lexington; acted in New-York. The Mountain Torrent; acted in New-York. The Rose of Arragon. Odofriede.

LAWSON, J.—Giordano; tragedy, acted in New-York.

LEACOCK, JOHN—Disappointed; printed 1796, Philadelphia.

LILLIBRIDGE, GARDNER R.—Tancred, or the Rightful Heir of Rochdale Castle; printed in Rhode Island, 1824.

LINDSLEY, A. B.—Love and Friendship, or Yankee Notions.

LINN, JOHN BLAIR—Bourville Castle; acted in New-York.

LOW, SAMUEL—The Politician Outwitted; printed in New-York, 1790.

Mc HENRY, JAMES—Genius; comedy, in five acts, acted in Philadelphia, 1829.

MADDOCKS—The Bohemian Mother; translated from the French; acted at Boston, 1829.

MARKOE, PETER—The Patriot Chief; printed, 1784. Reconciliation.

McLAREN, ARCHIBALD—The Coup de Main.

MERRY, ROBERT—The Abbey of St. Augustine; tragedy, acted at the Chesnut-street theatre, Philadelphia.

MILNE—The Comet. All in a Bustle; prel. A Flash in the Pan; farce.

MORRIS, GEORGE P.—Brier Cliff; performed at Chatham-street theatre, New-York, 1825; often repeated, and very successful.

MURDOCH, J.—The Triumph of Love.

NOAH, M. M.—The Fortress of Sorrento. The Grecian Captive. The Grand Canal. Marion, or the Hero of Lake George. O Yes, or the New Constitution. She Would be a Soldier. The Siege of Yorktown. Paul and Alexis. Yesef Caramatti. All acted with great success.

PAULDING, JAMES K.—The Lion of the West; comedy, acted in New-York with great success, and often repeated.

PAYNE, JOHN HOWARD.—The Lancers, Brutus; tragedy. Oswali of Athens. Peter Smink, or Which is the Miller?

- Proclamation. Richelieu. Therese. 'Twas I. Two Galley Slaves. Accusation. Adeline. Ali Pacha, or the Signet Ring. King Charles the Second, or the Merry Monarch. Clari.
- PHILLIPS, J. D.—The Female Spy; acted in New-York, 1828. Paul Clifford. Beauty and Booty.
- POTTER, REUBEN—Phelles, King of Tyre; tragedy. Don Alonzo; tragedy.
- RITTENHOUSE, DAVID—Lucy Sampson; translated from Lessing, printed in 1789.
- ROBINSON, J.—Yorker's Stratagem.
- ROWSON, MRS.—The Female Patriot; acted in Philadelphia in 1795. Slaves in Algiers.
- SAWYER, LEMUEL—Black Beard. The Wreck of Honour.
- SIMMONS, J. W.—Valdemar.
- SMITH, ELIHU HUBBARD—Edwin and Angelina, or the Bandit; opera, played at New York in 1796.
- SMITH, RICHARD PENN—William Penn; acted in Philadelphia. The Divorce. The Avengers. The Disowned. The Deformed. Eighth of January. A Wife at a Venture. Quite Correct. The Sentinels. The Pelican. The Recluse.
- SMITH, CHARLES—Several bad translations from Kotzebue.
- SMITH, W. R.—The Happy Return; a monologue.
- STOCK, THOMAS—The Wedding in Wales; acted in Philadelphia.
- STONE, JOHN AUGUSTUS—Fauntleroy; tragedy, acted in Charleston. Metamora; tragedy, acted in New-York with great success. Edwin Forest, the tragedian, paid the author 500 dollars for this play. La Roque the Regicide; acted in Charleston. The Demoniac. Tancred. Touretoun. The Restoration, or the Diamond Cross. All pieces of distinguished merit.
- STRONG—The Fall of Iturbide; tragedy.
- TALBOT, CHARLES—Paddy's Trip to America.
- TAYLOR—The Water Witch.
- TROUBAT, FRANCIS—The Phrenologist; farce.

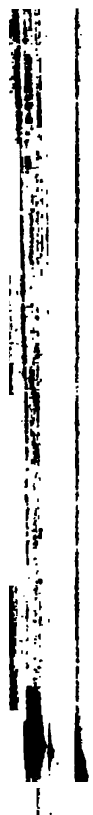
- TURNBULL, J. D.—Love and War. Cottage of the Forest. Rudolph; acted in Boston. Victor. Maid of Hungary.
- TYLER, ROYAL—The Contrast; comedy, acted in New York, 1787. May Day; farce, 1787.
- WARREN, MRS.—The Sack of Rome; Boston, 1790.
- WARREN, M.—The Ladies of Castile; tragedy, Boston, 1790.
- WETMORE, ALPHONSO—The Pedlar; farce in three acts.
- WHITE, WM. CHARLES—The Clergyman's Daughter; tragedy. The Poor Lodger. Alonzo.
- WHITE, M. M.—Liberty in Louisiana; acted in Petersburg. Va.
- WILLIAMSON, J. B.—Preservation, 1800.
- WILSON, JANE—Percy.
- WINSTANLEY—The Hypocrites Unmasked; comedy, printed in New-York.
- WOOD, MRS.—The North American; in five acts.
- WOODWORTH, SAMUEL—The Deed of Gift, acted in Boston. La Fayette, or the Castle of Olmutz; acted in New York. The Widow's Son; acted in New York. The Forest Rose; acted in New York. This author's plays have been very successful.
- WRIGHT, FRANCES—Altorf; tragedy, played in New York, 1819.

THE END.

LONDON :

IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.





Stanford University Libraries



3 6105 005 637 041

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
CECIL H. GREEN LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-1493

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

F/S JUN 30 1996

F/T AUG 2 1997

